BEYOND PEACE

THE SEARCH FOR SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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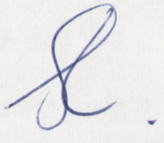
DECLARATION

This thesis is my own work. All sources used have been acknowledged.



(Robert Bowker)

March 1995

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the memory of Winsome and Athol Bowker.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis was written while I was attached from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to the Centre for Middle Eastern and Central Asian Studies of the Australian National University. Others will have to judge the extent to which I have contributed in this work to Australian foreign policy interests, or to analysis of security issues in the Middle East. For my part, I have enjoyed the best of both worlds for a year, drawing upon the expertise available in those institutions.

I have been grateful for the opportunity to focus intensively and exclusively on issues which have engaged my professional and personal interests for more than two decades. I have developed fresh insights into many of those issues. I have also been introduced to a range of perspectives and concepts which apply well beyond the concerns addressed here. My only regret is that the more I worked, the more I realised I had barely begun to come to grips with most of the issues addressed in this study.

I owe thanks to many people for this opportunity, and for the support I have received over the past year. It would be impossible to list them all, but some stand out. Foreign Minister Gareth Evans was generous with his time and suggestions regarding the paths to explore in examining his own work. In DFAT, I am especially grateful to Mike Costello, Gillian Bird, Howard Bamsey, Mike Landale and Ric Wells for getting me started; and to Kevin Boreham, Tonia Shand, Robert Newton, Peter Carroll and Jacqueline Holmes for help and advice throughout the year. I deeply appreciate the support of many colleagues at posts in helping to arrange my fieldwork, and in follow-up. Mike Smith, in particular, was of enormous assistance. Many colleagues were prepared to provide me with accommodation during my travels. I am most grateful to them and to their families for their generosity.

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Finally, I would like to acknowledge the contribution to this research of my family. Jennifer, and our remaining school-age children Sam and Tabitha have had to contend with the contradictions of a domestic situation involving four full-time students and one computer for over a year. They have done so without taking a democratic decision to regain an equitable share of their rights to education through modern technology. That says lots about their tolerance for the behavioural deficiencies of their husband and father. I have a great deal for which to be grateful.

A NOTE ON SOURCES

While every effort has been made to identify public sources for the information and comments in this study, the author has also drawn on the advice and views of a number of highly placed officials, analysts and other individuals who would prefer to have their comments treated as confidential. That wish has been respected. Where it has been absolutely essential to identify a particular source, the details of the individual have been provided separately to the examiners of this thesis and to the Director of the Centre for Middle Eastern and Central Asian Studies. For obvious reasons, such sources are not necessarily among those listed by the author.

ABSTRACT

This study examines whether the concept of cooperative security may be applied to the search for security between Israel and its Arab neighbours. Taking as its starting point the relationships between leaders, governments and audiences in the Middle East, it examines the problems of overcoming political differences and of reaching agreement on security objectives. It argues that institutional approaches to the development of cooperative security must function both between states and within states if they are to achieve worthwhile results. The thesis suggests some possible elements of such an approach, and reviews the possible role of external parties.

The main conclusion of the thesis is that the feasibility of cooperative security in the Arab-Israel context is heavily qualified by scepticism about its political feasibility within realistic time frames. If the ideas of cooperative security are to have a chance of success, the peace-building processes begun in Madrid must be steered towards achieving institutional outcomes which reflect and develop that approach.

INTRODUCTION

> Whatever happens in war or diplomacy, whatever territory is won or lost, whatever accommodations or compromises are finally made, the future guarantees that Arabs and Jews will remain close neighbours in this weary land, entangled in each other's fears. They will not escape from one another. They will not find peace in treaties, or in victories. They will find it, if they find it at all, by looking into each other's eyes...
>
> David Shipler
> *Arab and Jew: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land*, Bloomsbury, London 1987 p.16.

The concept of cooperative security—a forward-looking and multidisciplinary approach to security—has become an important part of current international discourse on that subject. The goal of this study is to arrive at an assessment of whether the concept may be applied to the search for security between Israel and its Arab neighbours. Within that framework, the thesis has two main objectives. The first is to examine ways in which politics and political cultures in the Middle East shape security policies. The second is to examine possible mechanisms that may help the parties to the Arab-Israel dispute to establish the basis for durable peace and security on a cooperative basis.

The prospects for peace between Israel and neighbouring Arab countries are much greater than at any time since Israel was created. Peace and security, however, are not necessarily co-terminous. Problems and uncertainties surround the outlook for Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli–Syrian relations. The most durable peace agreements will be those which maximise the prospects for regional security.

The essential argument of the thesis is that there is limited likelihood that a cooperative approach to security between Israel and its neighbours will emerge spontaneously. If such an approach is to develop, it will require a deliberate decision by regional leaders to foster supporting institutions. Leaders will need to involve their audiences in that process.[1] Achieving positive and durable outcomes will require more than a constructive approach to resolving political differences between governments. It will also require leaders to be willing to win support for

[1] The idea of audiences in the Middle East context will be explained in an examination of the political culture of the region. The term "audience" is used rather than "public", not least because of the limited extent to which one can speak of meaningful popular participation in policy development in the Arab countries at this stage.

compromise solutions within the domestic political environment. It will be argued that, if the principles of cooperative security are to be applied, agreement will be needed at an early stage of the peace-building process regarding the basis on which cooperation will be undertaken. Trust-building and burden-sharing arrangements must be devised. The development of cooperative approaches to regional security will require a deliberate effort to reduce the political significance of military, economic and other imbalances, in a situation where Israel will remain the predominant regional power. Given the legacy of conflict and the ongoing imbalances of power between them, there will need to be a co-ordinated effort by governments to develop a sense of mutuality between Israelis and Arabs at the popular level.

The structure of the thesis

The first chapter lays the theoretical foundations for subsequent chapters. It discusses the development of conceptual thinking about security and sets out the approach to security that will be adopted for the purposes of this study. It examines the concept of cooperative security. The second chapter discusses the nature of the political culture within which security policies are framed in the Middle East, and the possible implications of this for the development of the notion of cooperative security in that context.

The third chapter examines the political dynamics of the Arab–Israel dispute from the perspectives of Palestinian and Arab nationalism. It discusses the domestic political capability of the Palestinian, Arab and Israeli leaderships to pursue cooperative national strategies. The fourth chapter discusses the impact of asymmetries of power between Israel and its neighbours, and considers the problems facing the parties in developing common objectives. The fifth chapter takes that issue further by examining the challenges for the development of regional cooperation posed by the water issue. The sixth chapter examines aspects of the outlook for regional military security that may affect the development of cooperative security approaches. The chapter focuses on weapons of mass destruction and the security dilemmas faced by Israel and its neighbours.

The seventh chapter suggests some institutional approaches to the development of support for cooperative approaches to security. The eighth chapter considers the possible impact of external governments, business and non-government organisations on the development of cooperative security between the states. The study concludes with some comments on the feasibility of cooperative security in the Arab–Israeli context, and underlines the importance of the notion to the regional outlook.

Scope

Some important qualifications to the scope of this study need to be stated at the outset. To keep within manageable limits the thesis does not attempt to review in detail the history of the Arab-Israel dispute and its legacy for the peace process. Its

main starting point is the process launched with the Madrid Conference of October 1991. Some issues do not receive the extended treatment that a more comprehensive study would warrant. These include the issue of Jerusalem, regional strategic arms acquisition, dealings of Arab states with third parties such as Iran, and relations between the Gulf Arab states and other Arab countries. Israeli political culture, and relations between Israel and the United States, are discussed only briefly.

Cooperative security is a largely undeveloped notion. A relatively brief but wide-ranging study cannot hope to resolve the uncertainties and ambiguities of the concept. This thesis does not set out to make a rigorous evaluation of its conceptual merits and weaknesses. The study focuses, rather, on the general thrust of the concept and the obstacles to its pursuit in the Arab–Israel context. In doing so, the thesis may help to enhance understanding of some of the factors which may affect the application of the concept in a specific regional framework.

This study is focused on the priorities of those in government who are responsible for policy approaches. Its starting point has to be the answers provided by leaderships, rather than audiences, to the questions of security for whom and for what purposes. Some departure from a state-focused approach is necessary to reflect the complex nature of the interaction between various focal levels of security in any situation. A more comprehensive study would investigate how security in the Arab–Israel context affects non-state parties. Unfortunately, there is insufficient scope in this study adequately to address that issue.

There is no single security complex or system in the Middle East. Rather, there is a series of security complexes whose dimensions may be defined according to the issue under consideration. The main geographic focus of this study will be Israel, its immediately neighbouring Arab states, and the Palestinians. But imposing geographic limits to the analysis of security is complicated by the range of modern weapons and the proliferation of weapons technology. If one explores security threats in political, economic and environmental areas that are beyond traditional military-oriented perspectives of security, the setting of geographic limits becomes even more problematic. The thesis will examine certain issues on a region-wide basis, such as some of those issues falling within broader headings of economic security and defence security. Mostly, however, it examines particular problem areas on a bilateral or sub-regional basis.

The thesis will assume that the UN will continue not to be a major player between the parties, and that the international community will not call upon it to divert significant additional resources to peace-keeping activity in the region. The study will not attempt to comment in detail on the optimum nature of possible regional peace-keeping arrangements involving UN or international forces. Instead, it will focus primarily on the political milieu within which security is being pursued.

Finally, the thesis tries to avoid detailed coverage of current developments in the peace process. It examines general trends and issues, but eschews as far as possible the hazardous business of prediction, especially in regard to Israel and the

Palestinians. Peace has existed between Egypt and Israel since 1979. The current phase of the peace process has seen the conclusion of a peace treaty between Israel and Jordan. The odds favour some form of agreement between Israel, Syria and Lebanon within the next few years, possibly sooner. The main concern of this thesis is to examine how the states of the region might move beyond the functional peace embodied in such treaties to develop secure relationships with each other.

I THE DIMENSIONS OF SECURITY

The complex dealings between states and individuals are an important but frequently overlooked part of the dynamics of security in the Middle East. Buzan suggests that security issues are conditioned not only by the structure of the regional system and the interactions of states, but also by the domestic characteristics of those states. He argues that the relationship between governing institutions and their societies should therefore occupy a prominent place on the security agenda.[1] That argument provides the starting point for this thesis.

It follows from Buzan's arguments that the development of security in Arab–Israeli context will require more than the achievement of certain levels of military capability and a constructive approach to resolving political differences at the leadership level. Though these are obviously important requirements, leaders will also have to achieve domestic acceptance of outcomes on bilateral and regional issues. Security has to be pursued as a process of developing support for, and of giving effect to, agreements arrived at between governments.

A further implication of Buzan's argument is that the development of security in the Arab–Israel context also needs to deal with differing political cultures. In the Middle East, as elsewhere, there will be differences between countries regarding what constitutes acceptable cooperative or competitive behaviour. States vary in terms of the thresholds that may have to be reached before a sense of insecurity becomes manifest. Different cultures, ideologies, political and philosophical approaches and circumstances produce differing security needs.

Ideas vary about the priority to be allocated to dealing with various threats, and the measures that are considered legitimate for doing so.[2] Within states, audiences may see competition and cooperation from widely varying perspectives. They may reach significantly different conclusions about the security implications of particular proposals or events. For Israelis, nuclear capability is a deterrent; for many Arabs,

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[1] Buzan, B., *People States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post Cold War Era* Lynne Reinner Publishers, Boulder Colorado, 1991 pp. 60–61.

[2] Buzan observes that security problems are not only difficult to solve but "may even be hard to specify with any precision...The concept of security can be mapped in a general sense, but it can only be given specific substance in relation to concrete cases." *Ibid.* p. 97.

Israeli nuclear weapons are a form of intimidation.[3] Unexpected negative outcomes of efforts to develop arrangements based on trust can have a significant damaging impact on perceptions about the limits to the possible and the desirable.

Security in the Arab–Israeli context is therefore a process driven by demons of history, emotions, psychology, self-esteem, and perceptions of capabilities and intentions. It is subject to the embroideries of imagination, poetry and political manipulation.[4] Very rarely can governments in the Arab–Israeli context associate security with positive political initiatives, and yet the critical factors involved in easing perceptions of hostility, and in enhancing the outlook for peace building, are essentially political and psychological.[5]

The scope of security

Security does not lend itself to precise formulations. Like concepts such as justice, legitimacy and authority it is, in Buzan's words, "a weakly conceptualised but politically powerful concept...whose ideological [core] takes us to the heart of politics. It is an intensely political concept."[6]

Security objectives may include such diverse notions as the political and territorial integrity of states, the survival of individuals in a Hobbesian world, fulfilment of human needs including needs for recognition and identity, social justice including distributive justice, and the protection of core societal values. Narrowly focused approaches to security, generally associated with the Realist school, tend to be state centred and preoccupied with issues of power, politics, influence and persuasion.[7] They generally neglect psychological, social and economic variables. Inclusive

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[3] According to one prominent Israeli analyst, continuing Egyptian efforts to pressure Israel to take major steps towards giving up its nuclear deterrent, are interpreted by Israeli leaders as evidence that "the Arab states wish to retain the option of waging wars against Israel, with nothing to worry about." Steinberg, Gerald M., "Middle East Arms Control and Regional Security" *Survival* The International Institute of Strategic Studies Vol. 36, No. 1, Spring 1994 p. 130.

[4] For an interesting discussion of the political impact of poetry in Arab culture, including its role "... in an age when Arabs want their poets to be political and to avenge them against the outside world", see Makiya, Kanan (Samir al-Khalil) *Cruelty and Silence: War, Tyranny, Uprising and the Arab World* Penguin Books, U.K. 1994 pp. 42–50.

[5] Jervis R., Lebow R.N., Stein J.G. *Psychology and Deterrence* The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1985 p. 228.

[6] *Buzan, op. cit.* p. 60.

[7] An example of the concept of security advanced by the Realist school is provided by Raymond Aron, as follows:
"Each political unit aspires to survive...[The] belligerent power that dictates the peace terms at the end of hostilities seeks to create conditions guaranteeing that it need not fight in the immediate future and that it may keep the advantages gained through force. We may say that in the [Hobbesian] state of nature, every entity, whether individual or political unit, makes security a primary objective. The more severe wars become, the more men aspire to security...
Security, in a world of autonomous political units, can be based either on the weakness of rivals (total or partial disarmament) or on force itself. If we suppose that security is the final goal of state policy, the effective means will be to establish a new relation of forces or to modify the old one so that potential enemies, by reason of their inferiority, will not be tempted to take the initiative of an aggression." Aron, R., *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations* Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1966 p. 72. Underlining in the original.

approaches, on the other hand tend to introduce so much complexity it is often difficult to determine what mechanisms are crucial to outcomes.[8]

Buzan gives thirteen examples of formulations designed to encapsulate the concept of security. In doing so, he underlines the range of views about the concept. Among those Buzan cites are Walter Lippman ("a nation is secure to the extent to which it is not in danger of having to sacrifice core values if it wishes to avoid war, and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by victory in such a war."); Laurence Martin ("[Security is the] assurance of future well being."); and Richard Ullman ("a threat to national security is an action or a sequence of events that (1) threatens drastically and over a relatively brief span of time to degrade the quality of life for the inhabitants of a state; or (2) threatens significantly to narrow the range of policy choices available to the government of a state or to private, nongovernmental entities (persons, groups, corporations) within the state.").[9]

Buzan's own definition of security, advanced apparently with some reluctance, is set in the context of the problems associated with the notion. He suggests that, in regard to security,

> ...the discussion is about the pursuit of freedom from threat. When this discussion is in the context of the international system, security is about the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent identity and their functional integrity. In seeking security, state and society are sometimes in harmony with each other and sometimes opposed. Its bottom line is about survival but it also reasonably includes a substantial range of concerns about the conditions of existence. Quite where this range of concerns ceases to merit the urgency of the 'security' label and becomes part of the everyday uncertainties of life, is one of the difficulties of the concept. Security is primarily about the fate of human collectivities and only secondarily about the personal security of individual human beings. In the context of the contemporary international system, the standard unit of security is thus the sovereign territorial state.[10]

Buzan argues, *inter alia*, for the need to examine security from five aspects: military, political, economic, societal and environmental. According to Buzan, military security concerns the interplay of the armed offensive and defensive capabilities of states, and states' perceptions of each other's abilities and intentions. Political security concerns the organisational stability of states, systems of government and the ideologies that give them legitimacy. Economic security

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[8] Andrew Mack observes that definitions of security which are so broad as to conflate diverse phenomena such as trade frictions, environmental degradation and AIDS may produce "conceptual mush and policy confusion". See Mack, A., *Concepts of Security in the Post-Cold War World* Working Paper 1993/8 Department of International Relations, Research School of Pacific Studies Australian National University Canberra p. 6. Kevin Clements, however, argues that "...if there is a desire to avoid having the 'specialists of violence' determine the parameters of the security debate, we need to start with an inclusive view and then work back to narrower and more exclusive views." See Clements, K. P., *Trancending National Security: Towards a More Inclusive Conceptualisation of National and Global Security* New Views of International Security Occasional Papers Series No. 1, June 1990, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, Syracuse New York p. 11.

[9] Buzan, *op. cit.* p. 16.

[10] *Ibid.* pp. 18–19.

concerns access to the resources, finance and markets necessary to sustain acceptable levels of welfare and state power. Societal security concerns the sustainability, within acceptable conditions for evolution, of traditional patterns of language, culture, religious and national identity and custom. Environmental security concerns the maintenance of the local and the planetary biosphere "on which all other enterprises depend."[11]

The approach to security taken by Buzan has been adopted for this thesis for several reasons. Apart from its conceptual sophistication, his approach has important relevance to the Middle East context. It is broad enough to encompass each of the major issues currently prominent on the Arab–Israeli agenda. Buzan is not concerned exclusively with state security, but his focus on states as the primary reference point for security is quite well attuned to the perceptions of decision makers among the countries of the region, as discussed in Chapter Two.

Problems with the multidimensional approach

The multidimensional approach suffers from a lack of precision. The various dimensions of security mentioned by Buzan may be linked but rigorous analysis to determine precisely what effect they may have on each other has barely begun. No effective linkage has been made, for example, between defence security issues such as the pursuit of arms control, and efforts to develop international human rights conventions. Linkages may exist, but depending on the priorities of governments, they may not find practical expression in the ways states deal with each other.

Some themes appear to be more important to some states than to others. Political security and societal security, for example, do not appear to represent important parts of the security concerns of most developed countries. In the ASEAN countries, in contrast, such concerns appear to rate highly. Economic and environmental security are probably more important priorities for South Pacific nations than defence security.

Not only does the nature of security problems vary from state to state, but different components of individual states are vulnerable to different kinds of threat. Elites face different threats to non-elites. Minorities, particularly ethnic minorities, usually face different threats to majorities. Some differentiation has to be made between national security issues of this nature, and security as it affects dealings between governments. But the boundaries between the two sorts of issue are sometimes difficult to draw. In the Middle East, minorities frequently pose security issues between nations as well as within them. Relationships between Shia Muslims in Lebanon and the Shia of southern Iraq and Iran, for example, are influenced by a complex blend of familial, religious, political and ideological factors.

The multidimensional approach also encounters difficulties when efforts are made to translate its premises into concrete choices for policy-makers. It is valid to ask whether there is solid evidence indicating that multidimensional thinking makes

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[11] *Ibid.* pp. 19–20.

sense, or is relevant, to decision-makers at a practical level. It may be highly relevant in some cases, such as among Japanese policy makers, where there is a strong commitment to strategic planning of foreign and trade policy.[12] In most cases, however, it may be difficult to test whether a multidimensional approach is being applied in practice. It is also very difficult to measure its success.

Such concerns about the precision and intellectual rigour of the multidimensional approach need to be balanced against the inadequacies of narrower conceptual approaches. Progress is being made towards refining the conceptual basis of the multidimensional approach to security.[13] It is easy, moreover, to exaggerate the theoretical and empirical standards of more traditional approaches.[14] In addition, as Mack points out, with the end of the bipolar framework of global power and the growing complexity of the international agenda,

> ...a new security agenda is emerging for which many of the analytic and policy tools of the past are ill-suited. The tendency to conceptualise security primarily in military terms, which still dominates the mainstream security discourse, is now coming under increasing challenge.[15]

Traditional scholarship on security appears to take little account of changing political agendas. For many political leaderships and audiences, the global issues, and even the regional agendas with which they must cope have become more crowded and complex. Both analysts and political practitioners often now feel a need to focus on sources of conflict and dispute which may arise from a range of political, economic, ecological and other factors. Concerns go beyond problems of cross-border aggression. Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans goes so far as to suggest that 'international security problems' can be almost anything the international community is prepared to regard as such.[16]

The Middle East provides an excellent illustration of the interplay between economic, ecological and political issues, and the problems each presents to regional security. As will be discussed later, the level of demand for water, and the

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[12] Dewitt assembles evidence from a range of Japanese official sources to demonstrate that "comprehensive security" for Japan is "not just a statement of goals but also of a policy framework". Dewitt, D., *Concepts of Security in the Asia–Pacific Region in the Post Cold-War Era: Common, Comprehensive and Cooperative Security*, paper presented at the 7th Annual Asia–Pacific Roundtable, June 1993, p. 6.

[13] See for example, the conceptual and empirical investigation of the relationship between environmental issues and conflict in Homer-Dixon, T. F., "On the Threshold: Environmental Changes as Causes of Acute Conflict" *International Security* Vol. 16, No. 2, Fall 1991; and Winnefeld, J. A. and Morris, M., *Where Environmental Concerns and Security Strategies Meet: Green Conflict in Asia and the Middle East* RAND, Santa Monica, 1994.

[14] The theoretical and empirical strengths of traditional approaches to security and the notion of collective security are most evident in relatively rare situations. They apply best where there is widespread agreement that clear risks exist of aggressive cross-border military activity. The concepts of power and deterrence underlying traditional approaches are less useful in situations where sovereignty is threatened in other ways, including domestic challenges to the authority of a state with material and moral support from outside its borders. A multidimensional approach is much better equipped to analyse and deal with risks arising from non-military factors, including political differences, which threaten societies.

[15] Mack, *op. cit.* p. 1.

[16] Evans, G., *Cooperating for Peace: The Global Agenda for the 1990s and Beyond* Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1993 p. 6.

potential for inter-state and intra-state conflict arising from that demand, is directly related to population increases, agricultural insufficiencies, the potential impact of climatic changes, and ecological degradation.[17] To this mixture can be added political differences, military imbalances and deep-rooted social and economic problems within the region. The integrative view of security usefully highlights the systemic character of these security problems. Buzan writes:

> Attempts to treat security as if it was confined to any single level or any single sector invite serious distortions of understanding. The 'national' security problem turns out to be a systemic security problem in which individuals, states and the system all play a part, and in which economic, societal and environmental factors are as important as military ones. From this integrative perspective, [these] levels and sectors appear more useful as viewing platforms from which one can observe the problem from different angles, than as self-contained areas for policy or analysis.[18]

For these reasons, security will be considered in this study as a multi-dimensional matter, despite the associated risks of losing analytical and policy focus. There is a lack of precision concerning the linkages between various dimensions of the concept. But on balance, the multidimensional approach to security is preferred to a more narrowly focused approach to the issue.

Cooperative security

The development of the concept of cooperative security is part of the creative re-examination of ideas about security in the European and Asia–Pacific contexts over the past two decades.[19] The report of June 1992 of the UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, entitled *An Agenda for Peace,* added to that process an important debate about the role of the United Nations in securing international peace in the 1990s.[20]

An important response to the UN Secretary-General's report has been the study at the end of 1993 by Gareth Evans, entitled *Cooperating for Peace: The Global Agenda for the 1990s and Beyond.* Evans focuses on the nature of the security problems facing the international community and proposes defining appropriate responses to them, essentially in the context of the United Nations. Evans has

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[17] Winnefeld and Morris, *op. cit.* p. 34.

[18] Buzan, *op. cit.* p. 368.

[19] Recognising that there are certain bilateral issues such as military contingency planning which for military and political reasons their planners are not able to discuss with each other, the focus of ASEAN leaders on security at the multilateral level has evolved away from a predominantly military approach. The ASEAN approach emphasises non-military means of developing and maintaining security, especially political dialogue, economic cooperation and interdependence, and the nurturing of the framework from external sources. While continuing to reject a formal CSCE-type institution, ASEAN has gradually become more receptive to consultative mechanisms—within the ASEAN framework and under its control—for promoting exchanges of views within the region and with external dialogue partners on security issues. See Kerr P., Mack A., and Evans P. "The Evolving Security Discourse in the Asia–Pacific" in A. Mack and J. Ravenhill *Pacific Cooperation: Building Economic and Security Regimes in the Asia–Pacific Region* Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1994 pp. 252–3.

[20] Boutros-Ghali, Boutros, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace Keeping* New York, United Nations 31 January 1992.

followed his study with an article in *Foreign Policy* concerning intrastate conflict which elaborates on some of the ideas in his book.[21]

Drawing on conceptual thinking about cooperative security in the Asia–Pacific context by the Canadian scholar David Dewitt,[22] Evans describes cooperative security as a broad approach to security which is multidimensional in scope and gradualist in temperament. He suggests it emphasises reassurance rather than deterrence; it is inclusive rather than exclusive; it is not restricted in membership and it favours multilateralism over bilateralism. Cooperative security does not accord priority to military solutions over non-military ones. It assumes that states are the principal actors in the security system, but it accepts that non-state actors may have an important role to play. It does not require the creation of formal security institutions but it does not reject them either. Above all, Evans suggests, cooperative security stresses the value of creating "habits of dialogue" on a multilateral basis.[23]

Although it has attracted considerable attention in academic and diplomatic circles, cooperative security is not yet a clearly defined and established concept. Evans does not suggest that cooperative security has achieved a high level of conceptual development. It is rather, he says,

> a descriptive theme, [a] broad approach [encompassing] the whole range of possible responses to security problems through which the international community is now struggling to find its way.[24]

Evans sees his idea of cooperative security capturing the content of both common security[25] and collective security, and picking up some of the multi-dimensional character of the ASEAN concept of comprehensive security.[26] But Evans's focus is essentially on the role of the United Nations in peace building, peace maintenance and peace enforcement, and the need for restructuring of UN operations. Much of

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[21] Evans, G., *op. cit*; and "Cooperative Security and Intrastate Conflict" *Foreign Policy* Number 96, Fall 1993, pp. 3–20.

[22] For Dewitt's contribution to this concept, see Dewitt, D., *Concepts of Security in the Asia–Pacific Region in the Post Cold-War Era: Common, Comprehensive and Cooperative Security;* and Dewitt D. "Common, Cooperative and Comprehensive Security", *Pacific Review* Vol. 7, No. 1, 1994, pp. 1–15.

[23] Evans, *Cooperating for Peace* p. 16.

[24] *ibid.* p. 16.

[25] In Europe, serious misgivings about the empirical basis and conceptual approach of traditional Realist scholarship on security were accentuated with the end of the Cold War and the breakdown of the bipolar world order. The most prominent result of the re-examination of security theory was the evolution of the concept of common security, an approach which is closely associated with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and the ideas which emerged from the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues (the Palme Commission) in 1982. Focused primarily on external military threats to states, and concerned mainly with military strategy and force structures, common security emphasises the need for taking into account the legitimate security concerns of others. The essential principle underlying the concept of common security is that security should be sought with others, not against them. The concept emphasises force structures based on the principle of non-provocative defence and military confidence-building measures. It also stresses the importance of cooperation and reassurance, and reduces the emphasis on confrontation and deterrence.

[26] Evans, *Cooperating for Peace* p. 16.

his study is devoted to an examination of the possibilities for developing greater conceptual clarity regarding the role and objectives of the UN concerning international peace and security.

A reason for Evans's very strong focus on the UN is that the UN has a unique capacity to bring together the military and socio-economic dimensions of security, within a mandate established by the international community.[27] Evans does not investigate in much detail whether the notions of collective security, common security and comprehensive security may be mutually compatible *outside* a UN framework. Where he does so, Evans's main focus is on the potential of regional organisations and states to contribute to peace making activity through mediation or other forms of involvement.[28]

Evans recognises the importance of fair systems of rules and dispute resolution, equitable resource distribution and the meeting of basic human needs. He endorses the arguments for such positions on both ethical and practical grounds. Evans does not address in any detail the mechanisms by which such approaches can be brought into being. It is clear that he has in mind harnessing the authority of the United Nations and relevant international legal instruments in support of human rights. He sees multilateral trade diplomacy, legal conventions such as the Law of the Sea and development assistance assisting the creation of more equitable international dealings in the economic arena. But these approaches are global in their orientation, rather than tailored to the specific needs of particular situations such as that which faces Israel and its neighbours.

One of Evans's key objectives is to underline the need for stronger UN focus on preventive diplomacy and peace building. In his book and in his *Foreign Policy* article, Evans stresses the importance of in-country peace-building as a long term strategy that addresses potential causes of insecurity. He particularly emphasises the security of individuals, including in terms of human rights, equitable economic development and good governance. He argues that these goals should be pursued

> ...not only for their own sakes, but also because making progress towards them contributes powerfully to national and international security...Economic development, human rights, good governance and peace are intertwined and mutually reinforcing.[29]

Among the ideas which Evans advances for improving the UN's effectiveness in terms of early warning and early dispute resolution is the establishment of UN Regional Peace and Security Resource Centres. Evans sees these Centres operating as preventive diplomacy units under the direction of the UN Secretary General, not only from New York but also in each region requiring them. He suggests they should be given a mandate to assess and to report to the UN on threatening

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[27] Apart from its universality and moral authority, the special character of the UN derives from the Secretary-General's authority under the UN Charter to bring to the Security Council "any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security"; and the UN's mandate for the use of force through the authority vested in the Security Council.

[28] Evans, *Cooperating for Peace* pp. 95–7.

[29] Evans, "Cooperative Security and Intrastate Conflict" p. 10.

situations as they evolve, and to grasp opportunities for dispute resolution. In addition, in liaison with other UN agencies and with the support of appropriate UN institutions, the centres could set up training programs, including programs in problem solving methods of negotiation.[30]

The possible functions of such centres in the Arab–Israeli context will be examined in Chapter Seven. The point to be noted here is that, despite the merit of the idea of such centres in principle, agreement among regional countries to their establishment under a UN mandate is improbable. In the Arab–Israel context, the acceptability of a UN role to each of the key parties has varied according to the issues under consideration. It has been affected by a range of political factors, mostly relating to developments within the region and the linkages between regional states and major powers outside the region. The UN has been virtually excluded from playing a role in the current peace process. An issue to be considered in this study, therefore, is how such centres, and other elements of cooperative security approaches, may be developed between the parties involved without the direct and active support of a UN framework.[31]

The cooperative security approach has important positive elements. In particular, like the notion of common security, the cooperative security approach acknowledges directly the need to address the defence and military end of the security spectrum. Unlike more traditional power and deterrence-based approaches, and common security, cooperative security thinking also makes a conscious effort not to lose sight of the socio-economic dimensions of security. There are, however, several aspects of the conceptual basis of cooperative security that do not appear to have been addressed in detail so far by Evans or others. There are also some practical problems that pose important challenges to the application of the notion of cooperative security in the Arab–Israel context.

Conceptual issues

Whether *states or people* should be the primary referent object of security has not been resolved among those who advocate the concept of cooperative security. In his *Foreign Policy* article, Evans demonstrates an idealist inclination. He proposes

> ...a fresh look at possible doctrinal foundations, within the UN Charter itself, for a more wide-ranging security role for UN organs than traditional, state-centred doctrine would allow...'Security' as it appears in the [UN] Charter, is as much about the protection of individuals as it is about the defense of the territorial integrity of states[32]

Although Evans has shown a strong disposition to look sympathetically at the case favouring the people rather than the state, this is not a universally shared view. The issue underlines the appropriateness of Buzan's remark cited at the beginning of this

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[30] Evans, *Cooperating for Peace* pp. 70–76.

[31] UN peacekeeping functions in the region may continue, but they are unlikely to be significantly expanded beyond existing levels. Support for a UN role will become even more problematic if attending to the Arab–Israel dispute gradually descends the order of priority among the crises facing the international community.

[32] Evans, G., "Cooperative Security and Intrastate Conflict" p. 9.

chapter about the political nature of discussion about security. In the Middle East, for the foreseeable future, the needs of the state are likely to be seen by governments as a higher priority for security than the rights of individuals. While prepared to acknowledge the universality of human rights principles, it seems unlikely that many governments could be persuaded to move towards revision of the relationship between governing institutions and societies as a necessary part of enhancing their own security, or that of their neighbours. Israel does not regard seeking such changes in Syria or in other Arab countries as a high priority among its security objectives.[33]

In a similar vein, most political elites would agree that democracy is a desirable form of government, but all would claim that their system is already democratic.[34] Syria or Saudi Arabia would question the underlying motives of countries which insisted upon a different form of "democracy" as part of a cooperative security framework.[35]

Neither Evans nor Dewitt has outlined precisely the *purposes* of the dialogue envisaged as the cornerstone of the cooperative approach. It is not clear whether such dialogue is intended to produce decisions on a multilateral basis; and if so, whether such decisions are to be reached through consensus or some other means. There is no indication whether, or to what extent, such decisions may be binding.

The creation of collective security arrangements which Evans, at least, specifically mentions as an ingredient of cooperative security, is difficult to envisage, especially outside the mechanisms of the United Nations.[36] In practical terms, it may be restricted further, to those situations in which the force projection capabilities of the United States are available to the UN, or to the parties involved. In the Middle East context, neither Syria nor Egypt—the two major Arab military powers—would be likely to assist in the formation of such an arrangement without significant additional financial assistance from Saudi Arabia even if political challenges to its creation could be overcome. Such financial support is unlikely to be available for the foreseeable future.[37] Dialogue processes may be more important—and more

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[33] Discussions of the author with Israeli MFA officials, May 1994.

[34] Lawson, Stephanie Culture, *Democracy and International Politics* (unpublished paper) p. 5.

[35] For example, an article in the Riyadh Arabic daily, *Ar-Riyadh* of 3 August 1994 extols the virtues of the Saudi system of government embodying the Islamic concept of shura or consultation in which, according to the writer, every citizen has the right to put his views to the ruler. The article finds fault with all political systems, other than the Saudi one, and is particularly critical of Western notions of democracy.

[36] For an analysis of the conditions required for collective security arrangements to work, see Morgenthau, Hans *Politics Among Nations* Alfred A. Knopf, New York, Third Edition 1960 p. 413. Morgenthau concludes that the three key assumptions of collective security may be achievable in particular situations, but the odds are strongly against such a possibility.

[37] Discussion with Anthony Cordesman, Washington, April 1994. The difficulty of building a collective security approach, even one restricted entirely to Arab states, is illustrated by the lack of progress towards such an institution since 1991, when, after the Gulf war, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states, Egypt and Syria agreed (in the Damascus Declaration) to establish a Gulf deterrent force. The force was supposed to use Egyptian and Syrian military forces; and Egypt and Syria were to benefit from a US$10 billion development fund to be established by the Gulf states. In the event, the money did not materialise, the Gulf leaders

feasible—features of regional cooperative security frameworks than collective security frameworks for the countries involved.

A further problem lies with the *all-encompassing nature of the concept* of cooperative security as described by Evans. Like Buzan, Evans has little to say about the relationship between various dimensions of security, beyond noting the obvious interplay between peace and development.[38] It is also unclear whether there are significant contradictions between the dynamics of confidence-building on one hand, and deterrence-based strategies including collective and common security approaches on the other.

Finally, there is a need to take a more nuanced view of the notion of cooperation. It can perhaps be seen at two levels. One level may be described as a cognitive level, in which parties can see benefit (or avoid negative consequences) through cooperation and believe they can cooperate, even at some cost to themselves. A second level is a normative level, in which the parties believe they have a duty to cooperate. The latter implies an emotional predisposition to cooperate which may include willingness to accept much greater costs than the calculations made under the cognitive approach would suggest.[39] Security issues of "low politics" (economic issues, environmental reform proposals, trade disputes and so on) usually lack the immediacy and drama of "high politics" such as military threats to national security.[40] Normative approaches to such issues are likely to be difficult to promote under any conditions, let alone in the circumstances which apply between Israel and its neighbours.

When the idea of cooperative security is being considered in the Arab–Israel context, therefore, it is important to have a clear idea of the nature of the cooperation which is being proposed—particularly whether it is intended to be basically cognitive or normative. Strategies to bring different types of cooperation about are likely to vary. The basis for cooperation will need to be developed gradually and with considerable deliberation among leaderships. It may prove very difficult to persuade politicians and their audiences to make sacrifices necessary to meet emerging threats whose actual dimensions are not immediately evident.

Practical issues

Security relationships tend to be dynamic and evolutionary rather than rigid. European experience has shown that movement from power based deterrence to at least partial common security is achievable in certain circumstances. But the

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decided that the military aspect of the agreement was unecessary, and it was decided to adopt a face-saving formula that allowed bilateral military cooperation. That too came to nothing.

[38] The basic notion of cooperative security appears to have been advanced by Evans with a view to the relevance of the concept to ASEAN thinking. The ASEAN concept of "comprehensive security" is also somewhat vague on how the component parts of its approach are supposed to fit together.

[39] An example of normative cooperation would be Australian willingness to make sacrifices to support the British during the First World War.

[40] Kennedy, Paul *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century* HarperCollins, London, 1993 p. 131.

dangers of uncritical acceptance of European and ASEAN experience as a guide to the Arab–Israel context are manifest. The dynamics of perceptual change, which are central to the development of trust-building, are poorly understood.

There is room to question whether confidence-building approaches can be implanted into societies where basic security assumptions, including the importance of deterrence-based defence policies, show little sign of change. As Macintosh points out, confidence-building is both a process and a procedure—a psychological process of perceptual transformation as well as the specific arms control measures that contribute to that process. It involves the transformation of senior decision-maker beliefs about the nature of the threat posed by other, formerly antagonistic states, primarily entailing a shift from the basic assumption of hostile intentions to an assumption of non-hostile intentions.[41] This is probably no less true at the popular level. Poorly executed or conceived attempts to develop confidence building can in fact bring about heightened levels of suspicion, distrust and misperception.[42] Leaders' perceptions of potential adversaries may also have an impact on wider audiences.

Adherents to traditional approaches to security based mainly on analyses of power and deterrence may adapt their thinking to cope with emerging challenges in other areas, such as environmental threats. But where such thinking is strongly reinforced by ideological considerations, it may prove to be highly impervious to new realities. The right wing of Israeli politics, for example, is deeply committed both politically and psychologically to deterrence-based approaches to military security.

Another obvious practical issue confronting advocates of a cooperative approach is whether states see their interests and objectives as served by cooperation rather than competition; and if so, in what fields and according to what sets of rules. The onus is on those who argue for cooperation to demonstrate that no party, least of all their own, would be disadvantaged overall by a change in direction towards seeking security with others, rather than from others. This issue is closely related to the asymmetries of power between regional states, and in the Middle East context, the imbalance of military capability between Israel and its neighbours. Some analysts may feel their state has been well-served by policies of confrontation or compellence, or that the regional outlook is so unpredictable that cooperation may be an inadequate basis on which to build security policies. There may be reluctance to depart from more familiar approaches. These issues are discussed later in this study.

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[41] Macintosh, James *Confidence and Security-Building Measures: A Skeptical Look* Working Paper No. 85, Peace Research Centre, Research School of Pacific Studies ANU Canberra 1990 p. 7 and p. 9.

[42] *Ibid.* pp. 17–18. Geoffrey Kemp pointed out prior to the launching of the Madrid process that to comply with the European model of common security there must be a shared desire to promote stability and improve relations. There must also be an absence of imminent security threats. He argued that none of these conditions applied in the Middle East and none was likely to emerge in the absence of "some breakthrough on one or more diplomatic fronts". See Kemp, Geoffrey *The Control of the Middle East Arms Race* Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, 1991 p. 129.

Agreement on the principles underlying cooperation, and their application to concrete situations usually becomes more difficult as cases become more specific. Reaching agreement for economic cooperation, for example, is usually complex. Governments need to establish what political and economic principles should apply, and how such principles should be reflected in actual agreements, on such questions as pricing, market access and assurances of supply. They have to agree how their cooperation should relate to other obligations, particularly international agreements and treaties. Governments need to develop acceptance among domestic audiences of the consequences of cooperation, explaining who will carry the risks of costs (assuming it entails departure to some extent from market forces) and how such burdens are to be distributed.

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the concept of cooperative security. It has touched on some of the issues, which will be elaborated elsewhere, relating to its application to the Arab–Israel context. Without going into the conceptual basis of the notion in much detail, it has shown that there are theoretical and practical problems and shortcomings with the concept at this stage of its development, at least in regard to its application outside a UN framework.

On a more positive note, the foregoing discussion has also underlined that cooperative security is a concept which combines a range of ideas which are prominent on the emerging international security agenda. Though they raise certain problems, the ideas underlying the multidimensional approach, and the focus on peace-building activity, appear to have the potential gradually to enrich the intellectual frameworks of both analysts and policy-makers.

In the Arab–Israel context, major unresolved political and territorial issues, significant imbalances of power, and a bitter historical legacy have affected habits of thought and mutual perceptions. These factors are important constraints to the development of positive and constructive thinking, particularly among political audiences, about the potential to achieve constructive dealings with each other. But finding peaceful alternatives to the use of force as the cornerstone of security depends primarily on the capability of governments to find ways of transforming the political environment. As Kipper and Saunders have argued, in reviewing the prospects for the Arab–Israel peace process,

> Negotiation does not initiate change. Change is initiated and shaped in the political arena. Negotiation may define, capture, crystallise and consolidate change already begun. But until political leaders have transformed the political environment, negotiators are unlikely to succeed. Or, if they do reach a technically sound agreement, it may not be fully implemented or have the intended consequences.[43]

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[43] Kipper, J. and Saunders, H., *The Middle East in Global Perspective* Westview Press, Boulder, 1991 p. 13.

It follows from Kipper's and Saunders's assessment that the political circumstances within which the notion of cooperative security in the Arab–Israel context would have to be developed are of particular importance. It is appropriate to turn at this point to an examination of those circumstances. The next chapter reviews the relationship in Arab societies between leaders, governments and wider political audiences, and the bearing this has on the way Arab societies develop and implement security policies.

II ARAB POLITICAL CULTURE

Political culture—the beliefs, attitudes and values which play a part in the shaping of Arab societies—has a far-reaching effect on the search for security in the Arab world. Its impact is felt in the ways leaders and audiences perceive threats. It also forms a key element shaping the institutions which have developed to organise and to manipulate power, and to provide policy responses to security issues. It has a strong influence on perceptions of goals, both between states and within states.

Pye has observed that the essence of political culture is "shaped on one hand, by the general historical experience of the society and the system, and on the other hand by the intensely private and personal experiences of individuals as they become members of first the society and then the polity."[1] Pye also notes that in the final analysis, political culture can be found "...only in men's [and women's] minds in the patterns of action, feelings and reflections which they have internalised and made part of their existence."[2] Analysis of political culture is therefore complicated by the fact that it is often dealing with the attitudes of individuals, while trying to make more general points about the behaviour of societies.

Beyond that problem, most attempts to describe the political culture of the Arab world risk excessive generalisation about what are, in important respects, very distinctive and complex communities and societies. Such analyses also tend to overlook the extent to which the nature of Arab society, like other societies, is evolving under the weight of domestic imperatives and external influences. An analysis of the potential application of the principles of cooperative security has to address not only the dominant characteristics of the countries concerned, but also the ways in which they are changing and are likely to change. It has to focus both on institutions or mechanisms, and on the attitudes and perceptions of individuals at various levels of society.

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[1] Pye, L. *Politics, Personality and Nation Building: Burma's Search for Identity* Yale University Press, New Haven, 1962 p. 121.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 124.

Who deals with what?

The social structure and political culture of Arab society are heavily patriarchal and hierarchical.[3] High levels of importance are attached to unwritten but widely recognised patterns of status. The deep-seated social and political stratification of those societies in turn have meant that the orthodox Arab political style is authoritarian by Western standards.[4] Authority is usually delegated within very tight limits at any level. Acceptance of responsibility for decision-making at lower levels of families, tribes or governments tends rarely to be encouraged. Responsibility tends to be sought less actively at those levels than is conventional in Western society. Leaders mostly are expected to devise and announce solutions, rather than to build team approaches or to preside over the emergence of a consensus.[5]

There are exceptions to this picture. Palestinians, in particular, take pride in their reluctance to be brow-beaten by leaders, possibly because of the lengthy exposure they have had to Israeli political behaviour, and they expect to be consulted about decisions taken by Arafat. Without the institutional underpinnings of the leader of a state, the search for consensus has been of much greater importance to Arafat than is true of other Arab leaders.[6] But Arafat's leadership style is probably exceptional, reflecting the peculiar situation facing the PLO as a political movement; and it is showing signs of evolving in more authoritarian directions in Gaza and Jericho.

Although the historical circumstances of Arab regimes differ, the Arab cultural milieu has been a key factor contributing to the shaping of institutions of power at the state level that are tightly controlled by leaderships, supported in a somewhat detached way by a narrow but resilient middle class. In his analysis of democracy and Arab political culture up to the 1960s, Kedourie has argued that a Western notion of enlightened absolutism became familiar to modernising Arab rulers of the nineteenth century. This notion, with its tendency towards centralised control, powerfully reinforced local traditions of autocracy ahead of Western notions of

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[3] According to the Egyptian journalist Muhammad Heikal, "normally when a regime loses the confidence of the people it becomes necessary to change the regime, but in our region...it becomes necessary to change the people." Quoted by David Hirst, *The Observer, Guardian Weekly* March 20 1994 p. 4.

[4] One Arab analyst described Arab societies to the author as comprising three societies within one nation, with virtually no connection between them (confidential source).

[5] These comments reflect discussions of Arab student perceptions of leadership with an academic specialist in conflict resolution (confidential source).They are also supported by personal observation and considerable anecdotal evidence. A Jordanian businessman has told the author of a meeting, at which he was present during the Jordanian elections in 1989, at which a candidate in an electorate outside Amman was nonplussed to be asked what he would do about the national debt. The situation was saved by a tribal elder telling the person who asked the question to sit down and be quiet. King Hussein (Abu Abdullah) had borrowed the money, the elder said. King Hussein would pay it back.

[6] On those rare occasions when Arafat has sought to proceed in a particular direction without maintaining a Palestinian consensus, the PLO has divided afterwards to a very serious degree. The decision of the PLO Council in 1974 to establish "national rule" only in those parts of Palestinian soil to be liberated, rather than the whole area, led to the formation of a rejectionist front led by left-wing Palestinian organisations. The Oslo Accord and the entire peace process formula also represent a dramatic departure from the consensus-building approach, with serious implications for Arafat's standing within the Palestinian movement.

representation and constitutionalism.[7] Some leaders have sought to resist change; others have sought to introduce programs of reform to forestall major transformations by encouraging incremental adjustments. In all cases, however, the leader has maintained control over the instruments of persuasion and coercion that are essential to the implementation of these policies.[8]

Political change is taking place, in response to a range of social, economic and other factors. In relatively rare cases, notably within the Hashemite Court in Jordan, there is a sense of urgency about the need for Arab societies to develop and to modernise political institutions, including in such areas as human rights, electoral reform, press freedom and political participation. On the other hand, in addition to concerns about the inroads of Islamic extremism, elites in most Arab countries are worried about the potentially destabilising effects of Western-style democratisation. Although such concerns are easily overdrawn, there are serious misgivings at high political levels about premature political reform opening the path to political chaos, retrogression and tribalism within already divided societies. Such concerns are also founded in bitter experience, including of the instability of the 1950s.[9]

Outside the leaderships, demands for popular participation are intensifying, and many of the prerequisites for democracy are being fulfilled—including rising levels of literacy; the technology to allow wider dissemination of information; growing economic diversification and rising standards of living.[10] But although forces for change outside leaderships have proven capable of rallying support, these appear generally to lack politically-focused agendas for channelling their momentum. Conservative forces, including supporters of the *status quo*, tend to display limited political coherence. Korany and Dessouki argue that the disproportionate influence of leaders in the decision-making process is a reflection of the social dynamics of

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[7] Kedourie, E. *Democracy and Arab Political Culture* Frank Cass and Co., London 2nd. edition, 1994 pp. 103-104. For an excellent discussion of "patrimonial" patterns of leadership in Arab societies and the centrality of national political leaders in decision-making processes, see Bill, J. A. and Springborg, R., *Politics in the Middle East* Scott, Foreman / Little Brown Higher Education, Glenview Ill., Third Edition, 1990 pp. 152-176. Bill and Springborg make the point that modernisation is requiring elites to recruit individuals of professional skill and competence, but recruitment processes are personally and tightly controlled from the centre of the system: "Considerations of political loyalty, personal connections and complete central control remain at least as important in determining entry into the elite as those of professional expertise, personal merit and institutional position." *op. cit.* p. 175. See also Korany, B. and Dessouki, Ali E. Hillal "Arab Foreign Policies in a Changing Environment" in Korany, B and Dessouki, Ali E. Hillal (eds.) *The Foreign Policies of the Arab States: The Challenge of Change* Westview Press, Boulder, Second Edition 1991, pp. 410-411. For comments on the Arab middle class see Hourani, Albert *A History of the Arab Peoples* Warner Books, New York 1991 p. 454. For a brief but useful overview of the characteristics of Palestinian society before 1948, see Morris, Benny *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, 1947-1949 Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987 pp. 11–15.

[8] Bill and Springborg, *op. cit.* p. 177.

[9] Discussions in Amman with former Jordanian Prime Minister Zeid al Rifai underlined concerns on that score; publisher and media commentator Rami Khoury took a more positive view of tribalism as an integrative factor in a changing world.

[10] Bill and Springborg, *op. cit.* p. 299.

Arab societies, rather than the exceptional qualities of particular individuals (though some individuals may indeed display such qualities).[11]

So long as it is reasonable to argue that in general, change is tending to flow at a rate determined more from the top down than from the bottom up, security in Arab countries needs to be viewed at three levels. The *first* level is that of the Arab leaderships, which is the only level that deals substantively with the issues of defence and military security.[12] Leaderships determine overall diplomatic stances and the defence policies flowing from them. Leaders may or may not involve their very small coterie of key advisors in determining policy on these issues. On some issues, consultation, bargaining and the search for consensus may be necessary or expedient because of socioeconomic, political or military constraints. But acceptance of the leader as final decision-taker is characteristic of all Arab countries.[13]

Leaders deal on a bilateral basis with other Arab leaders, mostly either directly or using personal intermediaries.[14] They will not involve third parties in their negotiations unless there is a clear and tangible benefit to be gained from doing so. Multilateral discussion of the "hard" end of the security spectrum is taking place at a lower level, including among academics and officials, in the Arms Control and Regional Security Working Group of the Madrid Multilateral peace talks, as well as in a plethora of think-tanks and conferences within the region and beyond. But the contribution that this activity makes to decision-making by leaders is uncertain.[15]

The *second* level of analysis is that of governments, which address the "soft" (or less quantifiable) end of the security spectrum—social, economic and environmental issues. Such issues are not usually the active concern of policy

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[11] Korany and Dessouki, *op. cit.* pp. 410–11.

[12] Discussion with Anthony Cordesman, Washington April 1994

[13] Korany and Dessouki refer to a presidential or leader-staff type of decision-making characterised by an authoritarian decision-maker who can act alone without consultation with any political institutions other than a small group of subordinate advisers, typically appointed by the leader and lacking an independent power base, or sources of information other than those available to the leader. They note that leaders often "make important decisions without consulting the foreign minister or even the prime minister, and frequently use presidential emissaries (not necessarily career diplomats) in foreign policy assignments." They contrast this style with the consultative and consensual style of Arafat and the immobility and inflexibility of Arafat's approach in responding to changing circumstances. *op cit.* pp. 415–16.
Whereas Korany and Dessouki write with Sadat and Nasser in mind, Ma'oz has made a similar assessment of Asad. He concludes that "...most, if not all of [Asad's] achievements have been accomplished singlehandedly by Asad himself. Naturally he is assisted by scores of advisers, ministers, army officers, but he makes all the important decisions and runs the country as a one-man show. He is as close to a one-person regime as one can envisage, the almighty of Syria". Ma'oz, M. *Asad: The Sphinx of Damascus: A Political Biography* Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1988 Preface p. xi.

[14] The extensive use of advisers as personal emissaries by Arab leaders in dealing with each other is partly a reflection of their concern to keep tight control of information about policy issues; and partly in order to have a means of observing at first hand the reactions of the recipient of their messages. Arabs tend to make fairly extensive use of body language as well as oral communication. Particular emissaries tend to develop a reputation for being "close to" their interlocutors—in Jordan, for example, Zeid al Rifai is widely believed to have good personal relations with the Syrian leadership.

[15] Some analysts in those Arab countries which possess think-tanks (Syria has none) consider that leaders tend to keep them at arms length, although they may sometimes use their briefing material (confidential sources).

development by Arab leaders. Inevitably, leaders will choose to be associated with achievements of a positive nature, and often will deflect blame for conspicuous failure onto governments. Economic and social issues are usually too complex, however, and the policy development surrounding them is too time-consuming, for leaders generally to take personal control of decision-making. Exceptions to this situation usually arise where the issues involved are of particular political sensitivity; or where engaging with other governments may contradict more far-reaching political objectives, or may be detrimental to leaders' handling of other security issues.[16]

The logic for developing a sense of common purpose and problem-sharing approaches among governments is strong. The economic and social issues that governments address are less immediately threatening to each other than issues of defence and military security. Some issues, such as environmental degradation, cannot be resolved unilaterally or on a purely bilateral basis. There may be profitable opportunities to present coordinated government stances to aid donors on some issues—as reflected in the efforts of Israel, Jordan and the PLO to win Western support for the establishment of a Middle East Development Bank.[17]

Exchanges of experience and ideas among professional advisors to governments are developing across an impressive range of activities under the aegis of the Madrid multilaterals.[18] But Arab governments have also to deal with political resistance to normalisation of relations with Israel within their own ranks, and particularly from their audiences.[19] For practical political reasons and because, as noted earlier, leaders do not usually accord a high priority to involvement in complex technical issues surrounding economic policy, governments also may have to manage in that area without the explicit support of leaders.

The *third* level of analysis is the wider audience. It should be seen at two sub-levels. The middle class in Arab countries feeds ideas, reactions and pressures into government structures and sometimes to leaders. Individuals from that group may serve occasionally in governments. The group tends to be concerned primarily with peace, order and preservation of its economic advantages. In the words of Albert Hourani, its members

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[16] An example of this is Asad's determination not to send positive signals to Israel through Syrian and Lebanese participation in the multilateral track of the Madrid process (dealing with economic cooperation, arms control, refugees and environmental issues) until key issues in the bilateral negotiations with Israel are resolved in Syria's favour.

[17] *Canberra Times* 12 January 1995 p. 8.

[18] Joel Peters has provided a detailed survey of the Multilaterals and describes the development of second track diplomacy. Peters also notes the evolving personal chemistry between participants. Peters, J., *Building Bridges: The Arab-Israeli Multilateral Peace Talks* The Royal Institute of International Affairs London, 1994 pp. 32–4.

[19] A confidential Jordanian source has described to the author a debate on this issue between senior political figures in Jordan, which underlined the sensitivities at that level to normalisation.

> support a regime so long as it [seems] to be giving them what they want; but [would] not lift a finger to save it and would accept a successor if it seemed likely to follow a similar policy.[20]

Beyond that strata, there is a much larger sub-group that constitutes the popular audience, or in common parlance, "the street". Limited interaction between elites (the leadership strata and parts of the middle class) and the street appears at times to cause uncertainty in the minds of elites concerning the political attitudes of the wider population. This uncertainty was reflected in the wide range of views expressed to diplomats and journalists in Jordan by the Jordanian business community and by government officials during the Kuwait crisis, concerning what the person in the street was thinking, or was capable of doing. Some of these views were more alarmist than first-hand observation of ordinary Jordanians would suggest was justified.[21] Security services, though well focused on specific threats to regime interests, do not have a good record in analysis of political developments and the mood at the street level.[22] Radical Islamicist movements, whose significance is discussed in the next chapter, operate among both the middle class and the street.

Leadership, personal interaction and politics

Understanding Arab politics involves understanding the complex interaction between these three levels, and particularly between leaders and wider audiences. Developing new approaches to security and winning acceptance for such approaches requires changes at all three levels.

A feature of the Middle East political culture, at least among the Arab states, is the extraordinary intensity of personal dealings at the leadership level. Most leaders significantly outlast their Western counterparts in terms of their length of service.[23] They fraternise and struggle with each other into their declining years. Politics between Arab states are personalised to an extent that is unusual elsewhere.[24]

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[20] Hourani, A., *A History of the Arab Peoples* Warner Books, New York, 1991 p. 454.

[21] In some other areas, however, the elite is well-attuned to popular sentiment—as for example in regard to consumer concerns about pricing and health standards of foodstuffs. King Hussein and Jordanian ministers listen regularly to talk back radio sessions featuring consumer complaints.

[22] This was demonstrated by the absence of forewarning of serious rioting over economic and political issues in southern Jordan in 1989. It was also reflected in the inaccurate advice supposedly tendered to the Hashemite Court regarding the likely outcomes of the elections that year.

[23] Seven US presidents have been in power since 1967. From 1967 to 1993 there have been ten secretaries of state, nine directors of central intelligence, eleven secretaries of defence, and twelve national security advisers. The top personnel in charge of US Middle East policy changes about every three to four years. In contrast, President Asad has ruled since 1970, and was already Syria's defence minister in 1967. King Hussein has ruled throughout the period in office of every US president since Eisenhower and has retained more or less the same group of close advisers since assuming the throne. Yasser Arafat has managed to stay on top of the PLO since 1969, and was the main driving force behind the Palestinian movement for several years before that. See Quandt, W., *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict since 1967* The Brookings Institution, Washington D.C., 1993 p. 422.

[24] Patrick Seale characterises President Asad of Syria and King Hussein of Jordan as "adversary-partners". Seale, P. *Asad: The Struggle for the Middle East* I.B. Taurus, London, 1990 p. 462. See also the comments on the relations between Asad and Arafat in Gowers, A., and Walker, Tony *Arafat: the Biography* Virgin

Associated with the combination of autocratic instincts and occasional displays of collegiate spirit at the leadership level is a tendency among leaderships to believe that once a deal is made, its virtues will be largely self-evident. The possibility that a sustained effort may be required to convince political audiences of the merit of the arrangement tends not to be well understood or welcomed at leadership levels. Hourani notes a tendency for Arab leaders, as they settle into power

> ...to become more secretive and withdrawn—guarded by their security services and surrounded by intimates and officials who [control] access to them—and to emerge only rarely to give a formal explanation and justification of their actions to a docile audience. [25]

Many Arab leaders develop warm relations with Western interlocutors, although most remain cautious, if not suspicious in their assessments of the individual leaders with whom they deal. But Western support combined with favourable global media treatment may pose insidious risks. Some leaders have been criticised for showing a tendency to address audiences in Western countries, and to pursue agendas attuned to the goals and concerns of "the West", rather than making certain of domestic support. Leaders who are conscious of Western expectations, and frustrated with domestic political situations, may be tempted, albeit unwisely, to disregard the judgements on their performance of domestic audiences and other key players. Two examples illustrate this problem.

By entering into the abortive peace agreement with Israel of 17 May 1983, Lebanese President Amin Gemayel sought to use Israeli and American backing for the Lebanese government to reshape Lebanon according to a Maronite perspective. In doing so, he ignored or deliberately excluded Shia, Sunni and Druse leaders critical to the process of national reconstruction. He also snubbed his nose at the Syrians. Lebanon's eventual abrogation of the treaty was probably inevitable under such circumstances.[26]

President Sadat acquired unprecedented media focus in the United States, even taking Barbara Walters and Walter Cronkite with him to Jerusalem. But this approach rebounded against him as the erosion of support for the peace agreement with Israel gathered momentum. Prominent Arab intellectuals such as Fouad Ajami have dismissed Sadat as "a self-defined peasant ...who [became] more comfortable with American television reporters and French visitors than with former colleagues and friends".[27] To many Egyptians, particularly supporters of Islamic radicalism, Sadat was too closely identified with the symbols of Western elitism. In part this reflected his taste for suits and pipes, and the high profile of his half-British wife

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Publishing London 1994; previously published as *Behind the Myth: Yasser Arafat* W. H. Allen, 1990 pp. 63–4.

[25] Hourani, *op. cit.* p. 454. See also the comments attributed to Heikal referred to in footnotes above.

[26] Friedman, T., *From Beirut to Jerusalem* Collins, London 1990 pp. 194–7.

[27] Ajami, Fouad *The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice Since 1967* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981 pp. 111–13.

Jehan, which was seen as an underlying force behind his reforms of Muslim family law governing marriage, divorce and inheritance.[28]

Those leaders who are demonstrably prepared to pursue constructive dealing with the West, and who are prepared to take an active role in seeking to normalise their country's relations with Israel, are most exposed to the political and personal risks of that process. As Bernard Lewis has put it:

> The eclipse of pan-Arabism has left Islamic fundamentalism as the most attractive alternative to all those who feel that there has to be something better, truer and more hopeful than the inept tyrannies of their rulers and the bankrupt ideologies foisted on them from outside...As seen by many in the Middle East and north Africa both capitalism and socialism were tried and failed; both Western and Eastern models produced only poverty and tyranny. Popular sentiment is not entirely wrong in seeing the Western world and Western ideas as the ultimate source of the major changes that have transformed the Islamic world in the past century or more. As a consequence, much of their anger is directed against the Westerner...and the Westerniser, seen as the tool or accomplice of the West and as a traitor to his own people.[29]

The drama of President Sadat's assassination has tended to overshadow the significance of the lessons it provides about the sensitivities of wider audiences to political and economic change imposed from above. As Ralph King points out, Sadat was not assassinated, as some states offended by the Camp David Accords immediately claimed, because of his alleged treason to the Arab cause in concluding a separate peace with Israel. One of the chief grievances of many of those whom Sadat imprisoned in September 1981 was the structure of peace with Israel. But the broader context is crucial in understanding the assassination. According to King, Sadat

> ...was killed by members of an extreme Islamic fringe group who violently expressed the distaste which many Egyptians felt for the effects of his vision; the social inequalities and corruption associated with economic 'opening'; the excessive identification with Western interests; and his increasingly arbitrary treatment of those whose opposition he had licensed but whose opinions he disapproved. [30]

Three very general and impressionistic points concerning the state of Arab intellectual debate are also relevant to the interaction between leaders and wider audiences. They are also relevant, therefore, to the development of perceptions of security.

Communication

The first point concerns the problem of communication within Arab societies. Much of the press in the Arab world is not free in a Western sense, but neither is it

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[28] Esposito, John L. *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality* Oxford University Press, New York, 1992 p. 95. According to Esposito, the revised family law was popularly known as "Jehan's Law."

[29] Lewis, B., "Rethinking the Middle East" *Foreign Affairs* Fall 1992, p. 115. See also comments by Esposito regarding Islamic Jihad and other radical Islamic groups in Egypt *op. cit.* p. 135.

[30] King, Ralph *The Politics of Reassurance: Egypt and the Arab World, 1977-87* WP1989/3, Department of International Relations, ANU Canberra p. 8.

controlled to the point of being a reliable indicator of government thinking. In Israel's neighbourhood, the 1994 Freedom House report on world-wide press freedoms gave "partly free" ratings only to Lebanon and Jordan (and noted that Israel only barely retained "free" status).[31]

The impact of the media, including television and film, on the formation of opinion among Arab audiences is extremely difficult to determine. Any analysis of the role of the media also needs to take account of important cultural gaps between urban and rural populations in all Arab societies, including between the small strata of society that lives in a multilingual environment (Arabic/English or Arabic/French) and that whose education is entirely in Arabic. The impact of the media, both Arabic and foreign-language, is affected by the political weight of the different audiences it reaches. Access to non-Arabic sources of information is possible in most Arab societies. Only a tiny percentage of the population, however, is comfortable working in foreign languages. An even smaller proportion of the population is able to understand the cultural frameworks which underlie non-Arabic sources.

Hourani mentions the importance of television in the development of popular Arab culture since the 1960s. He notes that it has played a key role in transmitting images across state boundaries, including news presented in a way intended to win support for government policies.[32] But anecdotal evidence suggests that the Arab media in all its forms does not appear to enjoy high levels of credibility among its audiences, including when it presents the views of governments. Iraq was widely believed to have purchased the services of commentators in the Jordanian media during the Gulf crisis.[33] In Jordan, Israeli television news in Hebrew appears to enjoy a substantial audience because many Jordanian viewers feel it is better able than Arab media to provide reliable insights into what Israelis are saying to each other, including about Arab politics. In Syria, on the other hand, leaders have been sufficiently concerned at times about the potential impact of Jordanian television news to block its signal reaching Damascus. Israeli Army Radio and Radio Monte Carlo are prime sources of rumour and gossip throughout the region, but such reports appear to have very limited shelf life. Mernissi comments acerbically that "a study of Arab socialism as it is broadcast and televised has yet to be done. It might give us a needed good laugh."[34]

Any analysis of the impact of television also has to take account of the more recent phenomenon of videos and cassettes, particularly those produced by the Islamicist movements. Distributed and broadcast through informal networks, including taxi

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[31] *Jordan Times* 12 May 1994, quoting a USIA report.

[32] Hourani, *op. cit.* p. 424.

[33] This was the firm view of Arab diplomats and some Jordanian ministers in Amman during the crisis, and supported by a fair amount of circumstantial evidence. The state-sponsored Jordan Press Association, which all Jordanian journalists are obliged to join, was alleged to have accepted largesse from the Iraqis during the crisis. See *Civil Society* 14 April 1994 p. 14.

[34] Mernissi, Fatima *Islam and Democracy: Fear of the Modern World* translated by Mary Jo Lakeland, Addison-Wesley, Indianapolis, 1992 p. 69.

drivers, these appear to represent an important means of generating, or at least reinforcing, Islamicist criticism of government performance or shortcomings. Esposito has made the point that the use of modern technology in this way, including the impact of fax machines and computer links, has enabled more effective communication of Islam both nationally and across borders, and has been a major factor in the resurgence of Islam in Muslim societies.[35] Secular leaderships have failed to match that performance, or to suppress the phenomenon.

The Arab press, both secular and Islamic, has generally reflected strongly nationalist sentiment in regard to Israel. Condemnation of Israeli policies against the Palestinians and their aspirations has been standard practice, combined with attacks on the United States for its perceived lack of "even-handedness". Arab journalists, many Arab intellectuals, political analysts and some practising politicians appear to see the expression of political and moral principle along these lines as an end in itself.[36] There appears to be an acceptance of political rhetoric as an art form which seems to exist alongside the realities of accommodation and compromise at the leadership level.[37]

It is beyond the scope of this study to assess and to compare the impact of pro- and anti-government communication networks on popular opinion, and the actual impact of either element on government policies. The strutting and fretting of commentators may sometimes be irritating to leaders. It can be profoundly unsettling at times to non Arab observers.[38] Its immediate practical consequences to leaders, however, appear usually to be quite limited.

The argument presented here is that the two phenomena—pragmatic foreign policy leadership and often highly vocal and critical media commentary on the behaviour of Israel—rarely appear to disturb each other. This may reflect a mutual desire to let such an equilibrium continue, and the lack of any compelling need to test the resolve of the other party. But because of this tendency for leaders and media to avoid direct exchanges with each other about the substance of government policies,

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[35] Esposito, *op. cit.* pp. 10–11.

[36] Makiya describes the prominent Syrian poet Nizar Qabbani as having "...the wounded, angry sensibility of the archetypical Arab Poet who sees history as one of permanent revolt and heart-wrenching disappointment. His poetry, which used to be revolutionary, is always militantly rejectionist—an affirmation of unity through denial by way of invective". *op. cit.* p. 45.

[37] An example of this phenomenon is that sensitive high-level negotiations were taking place in May 1994 between Israeli and Jordanian leaders which resulted in agreement to the termination of the state of war between the two countries. While those negotiations were proceeding, a statement was issued in Amman by a group of "72 individuals comprising representatives of eight Jordanian political parties, professional associations, unions and popular organisations and other citizens" which strongly rejected "all agreements designed to subjugate the Arabs to the normalisation process with the Zionist enemy" and promised to "ensure popular expression of rejection of subjugation to and normalisation with Israel". *Jordan Times* 11 May 1994 p. 3.

[38] During the Gulf War, the press adviser to King Hussein, Muhyieddin, published a comment in the leading Jordanian Arabic daily, *al Ra'i* calling for retaliation against Westerners for attacks against Iraq which killed Iraqi civilians.

the contribution each can make to the shaping of audience perceptions regarding issues such as cooperative security strategies is quite limited. [39]

Problems of communication also exist *outside* the media. Leaders have a range of devices with which to defend themselves or insulate themselves from criticism. Some can command personal loyalty even where persuasion is not entirely effective. Individuals, however, cannot always fall back on those assets. Many professionals and academics are unwilling to undergo personal criticism and innuendo for participating in, or supporting, activities aimed at development of normal dealings with Israelis. Others may be unable to surmount organised opposition to the idea of participation in such activities, particularly from within professional associations of doctors, engineers, lawyers, journalists and writers where such opposition is often strongest.[40] Whereas leaderships are relatively free to pursue their own agendas, the prominence of such professional associations in Arab societies, and the fact that most are freely elected, makes it difficult for governments and individuals to avoid dealing with them. Communication by leaders with audiences at the grass roots level regarding compromise with Israel will have to contend with the political professionalism and acuity of Islamist activists, and their deep-seated rejection of that notion.

Advancement of the peace process in the medium to long term will alter the conditions which until now have been used by some regional governments as a key justification for high levels of government control over political and economic freedoms. And, while regimes will remain generally authoritarian by Western standards, if they are to be effective in mobilising popular support for government programs they will probably find it necessary increasingly to allow individuals to enjoy a sense of participation in decisions that affect them. Indeed, the possibility exists that a combination of improved communication between leaders and audiences, to meet broader government needs, and greater democratisation, to meet audience demands, may create avenues to power for those forces which are most likely to seek a reversal of the compromises on which peace will be based.

It seems unlikely that responses to the agricultural, ecological and other challenges facing the region can be kept entirely separate from the question of relations with Israel. Proposing to tackle these issues on a cooperative basis with Israel, however, in the absence of agreement at both leadership and popular levels to compromise on core political differences, will test the limits of the politically possible. Security will prove elusive unless peace is pursued within a framework which provides for a

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[39] In terms of the perceptions of Israelis, of course, Arab commentaries can be of some significance. Friedman notes "...a deep-rooted Israeli obsession with stated Arab intentions, as opposed to actual Arab capabilities... Some politician making a speech or some poet writing a verse calling for the elimination of the Jewish state [has] always provided ammunition for [Israelis] to exclaim "How can you make peace with such people? Look at what they are saying about us!" Many Israeli Jews are still haunted by the fact that Hitler clearly laid out all of his plans for the Jews in Mein Kampf and other publications long before he came to power, but no-one paid attention". Friedman, T., *op cit.* pp. 520–21.

[40] Confidential source.

balance between continuity and change within societies; and which encourages growing levels of communication and interaction between states and peoples.

World views

A second point, at the risk again of generalising too broadly, is that at the popular level in Arab societies somewhat different views of the world are evident to those of Arab leaderships. At the level within which they operate, Arab leaders and their select handful of advisors are attuned to an advanced degree to each other. They are probably on similar wavelengths so far as what they would each regard as the realities of their region. They may make errors of judgement, or be misled, but such mistakes are comparatively rare.[41]

Leaderships are not generally concerned, however, with communicating their knowledge and insights to their wider audiences. The realities of the policy choices facing leaderships are rarely discussed by those leaderships in the public domain. Dealings between leaders are rarely reported in detail or in a balanced way. Political audiences are not usually given credible information about such dealings, or about military and political capabilities. Information about policy options is rarely put before the public. In some cases, both the factual information which is provided to audiences is manipulated by leaderships, and the interpretation of that information by the media may be questionable. In most Arab countries intelligence briefings are not provided to more than a handful of senior military officers.[42]

In contrast to the hard-headed sophistication prevailing at the leadership level, among Arab political audiences—like audiences elsewhere—there is frequently a will to believe that what ought to be, can be. Friedman points out that in the Middle East people who have never wielded power have illusions about how much those who have power can really do.[43] The opacity of dealings between leaders contributes to this misreading of political realities. So too does a widespread lack of understanding of the United States and its level of attention to Middle East matters in the overall scheme of American priorities. There is no institute in the Arab world devoted to analysis of the United States, despite the perceived importance of the US to the region. Nor does there appear to be any institute undertaking serious study of Israel.

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[41] This does not necessarily apply, however, to Arab leaders' understanding of the dynamics of Israeli politics or to those of the United States. There is a strong possibility, for example, that the Syrian leadership will misread the mood of the Israeli voter, or fail to appreciate what outcomes Rabin needs to obtain from Syria if the Golan issue is to be resolved in accordance with Syrian wishes. The other, rather glaring, exception to this generalisation is the misreading by Saddam Hussein of Saudi and Egyptian leadership reactions to his invasion of Kuwait, as well as his misjudgement of the likely responses of the United States and Israel.

[42] Confidential source.

[43] Friedman records several examples of how ordinary Lebanese and quite senior Lebanese political figures maintained misperceptions and unrealistic expectations of the United States. He records that whenever he would mention to former Lebanese Prime Minister Saeb Salam some problem which needed to be addressed in the Middle East, "...Salam would just shake his head back and forth and say, 'America, America, America' ". Friedman also makes the point that the US too often failed to be sufficiently explicit regarding the limits to its role in Lebanon. *op. cit.* pp. 207–9.

The problem, however, is more complex than that. Contemporary education systems and social intercourse in Arab countries place great emphasis on maintaining consensual dealings among family members and among peer groups. The intellectual comforts of generalisation and received wisdom are frequently favoured over creative thinking and debate, particularly among close friends and relatives. A Jordanian academic, Ahmad Majdoubeh, has suggested that

> ...the Arab of today is essentially aloof and disinterested with respect to what actually goes on around him/her in the immediate community and the society at large in terms of real participation and effective involvement, [though] not in terms of the circulation of hearsay, gossip and information communicated second or third-hand. [He] is generally either unintellectual or anti-intellectual. He is much more likely to be excited by a cheap Egyptian TV soap opera...than about a serious conversation with a fellow countryman or an exchange of views with an Arab 'brother'. This applies almost as much to the man in the street as to the college professor.[44]

Fatima Mernissi, characteristically, is even more outspoken. She contends that in Arab society

> freedom of thought is demonized and associated with Kharijite rebellion and disorder. The state uses the public schools to propagandize us.[45]

Feelings of grievance and of victimisation among Arab audiences, combined with perceived gaps between principle and practice in the behaviour of the international community relevant to their situation, have produced significant, emotion-driven misreading of the limits of the possible.[46] There is a strong tendency flowing from this intellectual and political milieu is to resist compromise on grounds of principle. Widespread frustration has followed.

A culture in crisis

The third and final point relevant to the discussion of contemporary Arab political culture is that Arabs—and of course Israelis—are struggling to find their way through a changing political environment. The question of Palestine is part of the shaping of the political identity of the Arab world. It has fundamentally affected the nature of Arab governance and politics. But the Arab–Israel dispute is a larger and more complex issue than the struggle between Israelis and Palestinians.

For Arab opinion which is focused beyond the Palestinian issue, the Palestinian struggle is only one important focal point of an Arab intellectual, cultural and political effort to renew its self-esteem. The wider Arab nationalist perspective seeks to rectify misperceptions, deliberately fostered or merely inadvertent, which surround the Arab world. That larger nationalist effort is centred on the need to find solutions to existential questions about what it means to be an Arab, about social

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[44] Majdoubeh, A., "Arab Society and the Challenge of Pluralism" *Jordan Times* 12–13 May 1994.

[45] Mernissi, *op. cit.* p. 47.

[46] Mernissi writes of a mental framework towards democracy that is "...structured by lack, by truncation, by gaps. People experience modernity without understanding its foundations, its basic concepts..." *ibid.* p. 47.

and political organisation in the Arab world, about the responsibilities of Arab leaderships, and how the Arab world should deal with, and be dealt with, by the West.

An important essay by Ahmad Shboul surveying Arab society and culture through an analysis of contemporary trends in Arabic literature underlines and illustrates this concern.[47] Shboul argues that

> in its complicated politics, its successful or failed economic development, its cultural map, its ongoing intellectual debates and public chatter, the modern Arab world has been a world in turmoil. This is not simply interesting diversity, change and dynamism. To the Arabs it means also, and above all, deep anxiety, uncertainty, instability (economic, social and therefore political); it also means a sense of insecurity at both the national and individual levels...
>
> The rising tide of political-religious 'fundamentalism' or rather 'radicalism', in the Middle East, and its apparent appeal to the young and highly educated, can only be understood in [the] context of successive disappointments, frustration and despair through which ordinary human beings have had to live. Above all the appeal of such movements...may be seen as a response to a feeling of betrayal [arising from] the failure of different regimes to meet their promises in realising the political, economic, and cultural aspirations of ordinary people.
>
> There are other equally strong but 'secular' voices in the Arab world, but these are usually ignored by the Western media and Western specialists. If both types of movement seem antagonistic to the West it should come as no surprise. This is not because of a supposed perpetual animosity between two civilisations, or because the Arab and Islamic worlds have somehow replaced communism as the West's enemy... It is rather because the Western 'democratic' powers, in their selfish pursuit of short term strategic and economic 'imperial interests', have often supported oppressive regimes and ignored the principles of democracy, self-determination, including cultural self-determination, and human rights which the same Western powers claim to promote...
>
> It has been brought home to educated Arabs that the so-called 'modernity' in the Arab world was no more than neo-patriarchy and that the so-called 'authenticity' was really neo-traditionalism: indeed that both may be seen as strategies of escape from painful reality...For most Arab countries, the most complicating factor, often ignored by Westerners is that of the awareness of being 'politically and culturally violated...' This is related to the painful Arab experience of past and present 'imperialistic' policies and attitudes associated with foreign power, including colonisation, dispossession, occupation and cultural appropriation. Arabic literature has been a witness and a participant in this age of Arab self questioning, grief, protest, defiance, struggle, and persistent hope. It is a literature of culture in crisis, a culture trying to re-find itself, to be recognised, to be its potential self.

Shboul's comments have been reproduced here in an extended form because they reach to the heart of contemporary Arab political debate. Although perhaps more closely attuned to the perceptions of critics of existing governments and the

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[47] Shboul, Ahmad "Arab Society and Culture: Burdens of the Past, Challenges of the Future" *Voices* (the Quarterly Journal of the National Library of Australia) Vol. 3, No. 2 Winter 1993 pp. 5–13.

political status quo than to the perceptions of leaderships, Shboul has described cogently the political milieu within which leaderships must operate.[48]

The prospect of peace with Israel on less than ideal terms is forcing some Arabs to address and define their interests from new perspectives. Many, however, are holding to ideas about the possible which no longer apply, and which probably never did have a strong connection to political reality. In some cases, the intellectual and political trauma represented by the prospect of peace with Israel and the decline of pan-Arabism is galvanising resistance to what is perceived as capitulation to Western designs. Evidence of strain is abundant in private discourse and in the public media where issues of Arab identity surface.[49]

An illustration of this turmoil was the storm in Egyptian media and intellectual circles in April 1994 surrounding an international conference on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Minorities and Peoples of the Arab World and the Middle East which was sponsored by the Ibn Khaldoun Center for Development Studies in Cairo. The venue had to be changed to Cyprus because of widespread and vehement opposition to the conference agenda.

Islamist writers attacked the premise of minority rights as inconsistent with Koranic injunctions on the treatment by Muslims of other "peoples of the Book" (Christians and Jews). They also objected to the inclusion of the Southern Sudan issue on the conference agenda. Prominent Egyptian journalist Mohamed Hassanein Heikal denounced the conference for including the Copts of Egypt as a minority, questioned the aims of the organisers and alluded to foreign (that is, Western) conspiracies against Egypt seeking to divide its social fabric in order "to liquidate its regional role".[50] The Coptic Pope objected to his followers being singled out. Other writers attacked what they described as an attempt to downgrade the Arab world by considering it as just one element of the Middle East, and by giving simultaneous attention to minorities in Turkey and Iran.

The fact that the affair was overblown to such a degree in the Egyptian media demonstrates the level of anxiety among many Egyptian intellectuals in coping with the changing regional agenda, and perceived threats to traditional notions of Arab identity. It underlines the limits to the capacity of Egyptian audiences to add new, potentially threatening and generally unfamiliar issues to political and intellectual agendas. It also provides a useful reminder of the sensitivities—which sometimes can be backed by individuals and political organisations of some importance—that

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[48] For a further commentary on the post Cold War, Arab-Islamic mindset, by an analyst of the Al-Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies see Mohamed, Abdel-Alim "Waiting for the Big Thaw" *Al Ahram Weekly* 17–23 November 1994.

[49] Much of the evidence on which this assessment is based emerged in private discussions during the visit by the author to the Middle East in May-June 1994. Similar conclusions are arrived at by Emile Nakhleh in "The Arab World After the Gulf War: Challenges and Prospects" in Boulding, E., *Building Peace in the Middle East: Challenges for States and Civil Society* Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder 1994, pp. 111–20.

[50] *Al Ahram Weekly* 22 April 1994; and *Civil Society* Ibn Khaldoun Center Cairo May 1994 pp. 14–15.

surround attempts to introduce issues whose origins are seen to be inspired by, or connected to, Western intellectual and political agendas. [51]

Outlook

The search for cooperative security has to be concerned with operating effectively within this complex, politically sensitive and tumultuous milieu. On the one hand, the unfolding of the peace process would seem to be an historically opportune, important and necessary moment for the introduction of new and visionary perspectives about the desirable nature of relations between Israel and the Arab world. On the other hand, advancement of such ideas at this juncture is going to present significant problems for leaders and governments which are seen as remote from their audiences; which are hampered by problems of communication with those audiences; and whose legitimacy is being challenged by the political and cultural turmoil enveloping the Arab world.

Achieving durable outcomes to the Arab–Israel conflict through a resolution of political differences will therefore require a process which will address a range of quite fundamental issues. First, to pursue their goals and objectives, including in regard to the development of regional security arrangements, leaders need to encourage at least a balance between Islamicist and non-Islamicist political forces. The challenge for leaderships will be to develop a political framework within which both trends can operate, without destabilising the fundamental character and objectives of the regime itself.

A second issue, of central importance to the durability of peace agreements, will be the willingness of both Israeli and Palestinian leaders to compromise on substantive and symbolic issues which at present, to much of their respective audiences, defy consensual solutions. At this stage, debate over the future of Arab–Israeli relations is intertwined with questions of communal identity. Unless change towards acceptance of compromise and new agendas for each party has taken place in the political arena, agreements arrived at through negotiation will not overcome feelings of insecurity on each side. Any framework seeking to achieve security on a cooperative basis must also allow time for audiences, as well as leaders to come to fresh conclusions about those with whom they are dealing.

Third, at a more general level, peace building towards cooperative security between Israelis and Arabs will also require a faster rate of change in Arab political culture.[52] Greater communication between Arab leaderships and audiences about the limits to the possible is a necessary prerequisite to compromise. In addition, audiences on

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[51] A further illustration of the complexity of introducing new approaches to regional relations was an extended debate in Cairo in June 1993 among Arab participants in a newly-created Middle East economic research forum. Participants were at odds over whether Israel should be admitted as a member (the idea was rejected); and over the name to be given to the forum. A number of Arab economists perceived a risk of the Arab aspect of the forum being submerged beneath a broader title simply referring to the Middle East. This led eventually to the forum being named "the Economic Research Forum for the Arab States, Turkey and Iran".

[52] It will also require changes among Israelis, but that is a matter beyond the limits of this study.

each side will require significantly higher levels of information on which to make judgements about strategic and other policy priorities. If they are to give new policies their support through the ups and downs inevitably associated with relations between states, they will need to feel they have a positive stake in the key decisions made by their leaders.

The political consequences of such departures from traditional approaches to policy-making, however, could be far-reaching. The evolution of popular demands for participation in Arab government, including among the Palestinians, is bringing forth a volatile mixture of pressures on leaderships. Debate among Arab audiences about normalisation of relations with Israel, and vice versa, will intensify as compromise settlements to political differences are proposed—or if they cannot be found. Scepticism on both sides about the commitment of the other to a genuine peace may well be heightened by that debate.

On the Arab side, leaders will have to be prepared to achieve acceptance of painful outcomes at popular levels where the organised strength of opposition to compromise is strongest, while rebutting accusations of capitulation or complicity in Israeli designs. Perceptual change, where it is needed, will be a significantly more complicated process than the negotiation of peace treaties covering bilateral issues. A range of political, economic and societal factors will influence the perceptions of the parties of the limits to the feasible and the desirable, as illustrated by the Israeli-Egyptian experience since 1979.

The lessons of Camp David

In concluding their peace agreement, Israel and Egypt negotiated an outcome to address their respective defence security concerns, and outlined goals for cooperation in other areas. They failed, however, to deal in a comprehensive manner with the legacy of political differences between the two sides, including at the popular level. Although principles of cooperation were enunciated between the two governments, there was little evidence on the Egyptian side of preparedness to proceed quickly to create and implement detailed programs to give effect to those principles.

The reasons for that failure on Egypt's part were complex. There was resistance among the Egyptian intelligentsia to the idea of a commitment to a separate peace and the inevitable isolation of Egypt from its Arab milieu and its traditional influence. There were also problems facing the Egyptian side of moving forward its bureaucratic and security machinery to deal with a new situation. Until early 1994, Egyptians visiting Israel had to receive permission from Internal Security, and to report on return concerning their activities. They were then placed under surveillance for several weeks.

Some of that slowness of response probably reflected the inertia of government machinery. Whatever the cognitive reasons for cooperation, however, there was also a distinct lack of normative cooperation attached to the relationship beyond the leadership level. That failure was matched, and possibly exacerbated, on the Israeli

side by a determined effort of the Likud-dominated Israeli government to restrict the practical focus of the peace agreement to narrow Egyptian—Israel concerns. Despite urging from Egypt and the United States to focus on confidence-building activity among the Palestinians, Israel pursued policies in the Occupied Territories designed to make its hold on them permanent. This included the rapid expansion of Jewish settlements. The raid on the Osirak reactor in Iraq and the invasion of Lebanon severely reduced the potential rewards of the peace agreement with Egypt in terms of Israel's dealings with other Arab countries.

Even at the "soft" end of the security spectrum, progress towards normalisation has been slow. Tourism by Israelis to Egypt has declined since 1990 following terrorist attacks and in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis, while increasing numbers of Israelis visited Turkey. Egyptian tourism to Israel increased in 1994 to 12,000 visitors, but part of that increase may have been due to visits by Palestinians holding Egyptian passports or Egyptians visiting Gaza and Jericho.[53] Cultural exchanges have been limited. Visits to Israel by Egyptian writers have been uncommon, an Egyptian artist who visited Israel in 1994 was expelled from the professional association of artists, and Israelis have not been allowed to participate in book fairs in Egypt. Some Israeli academics believe that reluctance on the part of many Egyptian academics to publish material in English poses problems for the development of intellectual exchanges.[54]

Direct two-way trade has not developed to the extent originally hoped, reaching a total of only $18 million in 1993 and $30 million in 1994.[55] Egypt has agreed to facilitate trade ties, including through such measures as the issuing of multiple entry visas for Israeli business people, and Egyptian trade and industry missions to Israel during 1994 were noticeably larger than in previous years. But the extent to which cooperation has developed has generally remained a disappointment to Israeli officials and journalists. Israeli business people have been discouraged by bureaucratic and political obstacles; the Egyptian press refuses to publish Israeli advertisements; and the agricultural sector is reported to be almost the only sector that permits bilateral trade.[56]

There is a general assumption that the level of social and economic interaction has been affected by the state of the political relationship, including the trauma of specific events such as the Hebron massacre of 26 February 1994. But Israeli investors are also believed to be wary of purchasing equity in Egyptian industries as they are privatised, partly because of commercial risk, and partly because of concern about the problems of doing business in Egypt.

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[53] *Jerusalem Post International Edition* Week ending 7 January 1995 p. 6.

[54] Confidential source.

[55] Trade statistics supplied by the Embassy of Israel, Canberra. Trade via third parties may add to that amount. The figures mentioned also do not include Israeli purchases of 2 million tonnes of oil from Israel annually under an inter-government agreement.

[56] *Ha'aretz* 17 January 1995 p. B.2.

On the Egyptian side, there is a common view that Israelis do not appreciate the limited extent to which Egyptians are attracted to Israel as a destination for tourism, or as a partner in economic cooperation, in comparison with European and other Western countries.[57]An opinion poll published in *Al-Ahram* in early January 1995 reportedly showed that 71 per cent of the Egyptians surveyed (in two of Cairo's main railway stations) would not buy Israeli goods; 75 per cent disapproved of Israeli factories in Egypt; 63 per cent said they would not visit Israel; and 53 per cent said they would not like Israelis to visit Egypt.[58]

The experience of the Israel-Egypt peace treaty underscores the fact that the development of positive perceptions beyond the leadership level is a demanding and complicated task. Dealing with military security while allowing other areas of conflict to continue does not bring peace through cooperation. The pattern of mutual mistrust eviscerating agreements to cooperate is likely to be repeated in other cases, unless there is a clear focus by leaderships on political and other issues of major contention as part of the peace building process.

The lessons of that experience are clear, but whether it will prove possible to avoid repeating them in future remains an open question. Jordan is determined to avoid the most serious shortcomings of the Israeli-Egyptian process. The Jordanian leadership took pains to ensure that all key outstanding bilateral issues were resolved, at least in principle, before Jordan concluded its peace agreement with Israel. But narrowing the inevitable gaps between rhetoric and reality will be a major challenge, even on issues where leaderships on all sides are genuinely committed to mutual cooperation and reassurance. At the popular level, it is all too easy to aggravate sensitivities through behaviour which is at best, culturally and politically insensitive.[59]

Conclusion

Progress towards confidence-building and mutual reassurance is likely to involve an intense political struggle, including in such complex and politically sensitive areas as the education system where political opponents of compromise are well-organised and entrenched.[60] The challenge may be greatest for introspective and authoritarian regimes. For those regimes such political risk-taking, and such a

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[57] Confidential sources.

[58] *The Jerusalem Post International Edition* week ending 7 January 1995 p. 3.

[59] *The Jerusalem Post International Edition* week ending 26 November 1994, p. 1. reported that a group of Israeli tourists had 'hora-fied' Jordanians by entering uninvited and dancing at a wedding reception at an Amman hotel.

[60] *Davar* 6 January 1995 reported that Israeli Foreign Minister Peres has raised the idea of convening a Middle East education conference in the region. In contrast, some Jordanian politicians have suggested to the author that it would be politically astute to avoid changes to education curricula for up to a decade while audiences become accustomed to the normalisation of relations with Israel, and see its benefits in economic and other areas. Reconciling these approaches in a manner acceptable to both sides will be awkward. Failure to address the question of education curricula, however, may underline the gap between leadership approaches and grassroots political realities, raising questions about the sustainability of peace.

redirection of political culture, would represent new departures posing great uncertainty. If their domestic position is at least tenable under the status quo, the commitment of authoritarian leaderships to working towards perceptual change may not be whole-hearted or sustained. Subjective constraints, including political judgements, ideology, principles and emotions all play a part at that level, as well as among audiences.

The bottom line, however, is that the questioning of existing security assumptions and practices is unlikely so long as political audiences are so profoundly sceptical of one another. The prospects for developing cooperative security arrangements in the region depend on whether leaderships are willing and able to win acceptance for fresh approaches.

III THE ARAB-ISRAEL PEACE PROCESS

Against the background outlined in the previous chapter, it is appropriate to take a modest view of the potential for developing fresh approaches to regional security. A realistic goal for the Arab–Israel peace process for the next few years may be to lay the foundations for relationships within the region which, like those among the European nations, are neither wholly competitive nor wholly cooperative.[1] The success of that process may be measured by the extent to which each of the parties feels satisfied that restraint on their part, in dealing with each other, will be reciprocated according to certain agreed principles.

Peace along such lines offers the most viable basis for leaders to address existing and emerging national and regional security problems. But an assessment needs to be made as to whether political differences between Israel and its Arab neighbours, on one hand, and between Israel and the Palestinians, on the other hand, may prevent such an outcome.

Israel and the Arab neighbourhood

At first glance, there may be greater cause for optimism about the prospects for durable cooperation between Israel and its neighbouring states than is justified at this stage in the Israeli–Palestinian context. A peace process designed along the lines of traditional diplomacy may prove viable because it can address traditional conflictual issues between states, unlike the need in the Israeli–Palestinian context to address fundamental issues of existence and communal identity. The establishment of peace treaties between Israel and Egypt, and between Israel and Jordan, and positive contemporary developments between Israel and Arab states on the periphery of the conflict such as Morocco, Tunisia, Qatar and Oman, support that assessment.[2]

A high level of stability and predictability has been maintained over the past two decades in dealings between Israel and neighbouring Arab governments. Apart

[1] Dewitt, *op. cit.* pp. 11–12.

[2] Developments during 1994 included the opening in September 1994 of Israeli "interest sections" in Rabat and Tunis. Oman proposed hosting a desalination research and technology centre in Muscat, with full Israeli participation. Press reports predicted early establishment of official ties with Oman, Qatar and Comoros.

from isolated terrorist activity against Israeli tourists and diplomats, there have been no serious military security incidents between Israel and Egypt since the signing of their peace treaty in 1979. The record elsewhere also suggests an aversion on both sides to armed clashes, except between Israel and Syria in Lebanon in June 1982 during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. At that time, however, Israeli actions directly threatened key Syrian strategic interests in the Beqaa valley.[3] Even during the missile crisis in the Beqaa of April 1981, both Syria and Israel moved with caution while challenging and testing the other.[4]

It is probably unwise to generalise about the prospects for change in this situation. Each of the countries bordering Israel has its own interests and experiences with Israel, and its national agenda to pursue. The absence of agreement on fundamental political and territorial issues has continued to present a major barrier to movement beyond crisis management arrangements between Israel and Syria. The chicanery of dealings between the parties has left a legacy of deep distrust among leaders and political audiences alike.[5] But that is not a universal picture.

An assessment of the prospects for peace between Israel and Syria, Lebanon and Jordan, and for the warming of its relationship with Egypt, needs to take account of three key factors. The first is the impact of regional political and economic trends on leaderships. The second is the unpredictability of the reaction of wider Arab audiences to the unfolding of the Israeli–Palestinian negotiations on core issues. The third, which will be discussed in the following chapter, is the asymmetry of power between the Arab states and Israel, and between the Arab states themselves.

Nakhleh makes the point that ironically, many of the challenges facing Arab states were brought forward by the "public diplomacy" that Saddam Hussein advanced to justify his aggression against Kuwait. He suggests those messages which resonated with the street included "democratisation and political participation, redistribution of wealth, artificiality of state boundaries, control of natural resources, human rights, the Palestinian–Israeli conflict, Islam and foreign presence." Of these, he suggests, the three main challenges facing the Arab state system are the issues of democratisation, Islam and the modern state, and the Palestinian conflict, and "the most fundamental issue" is that of democratisation.[6]

Political and economic trends, radical Islam and democratisation

Though it is difficult to generalise about movements which are active in widely differing political circumstances, radical Islamic movements are probably the most

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[3] For an Israeli view of the opening of the conflict with Syria in Lebanon in 1982 see Schiff, Ze'ev and Ya'ari, Ehud *Israel's Lebanon War*, translated by Ina Friedman, Allen and Unwin, London, 1984 especially pp. 157–9.

[4] Seale *op. cit.* pp. 368–72.

[5] Seale describes how Israeli forces had the mission to seize the Beqaa valley and advance on the Beirut-Damascus road, despite Begin's assurances to the Knesset (and to the US) that Israeli objectives were limited to widening the security zone of the border area to 40 kms. *op. cit.* p. 379. Asad found, after accepting a US brokered cease-fire, that Begin denied that this meant a cease-fire in place. *op. cit.* p. 385.

[6] Nakhleh, Emile A., "The Arab World After the Gulf War" in Boulding, *op. cit.* pp. 111–13.

important emerging political force in the Arab world. The impact of radical Islam is arguably greatest where governments least fulfil their obligations to ordinary citizens. It has made effective use of high levels of popular apathy and alienation from state-sponsored political processes, and failures among Arab governments to provide for and to protect their citizens. In its various manifestations, Islamic radicalism has been able to compete effectively with secular political alternatives in offering a positive sense of identity, in proposing visionary solutions, and in providing tangible economic, social and moral support to its followers. Grassroots activities include the provision of such facilities as hospitals, clinics, legal-aid societies, banks, investment houses, insurance companies, schools, child care centres, youth camps, religious publishing and broadcasting, subsidised housing and food distribution.[7] The Egyptian analyst Saad Eddin Ibrahim writes:

> ...Islamic activism [is establishing] concrete Islamic alternatives to the socio-economic institutions of the state and the capitalist sector. Islamic social welfare institutions are better run than their state-public counterparts, less bureaucratic and impersonal...They are definitely more grass roots oriented, far less expensive and less opulent than the institutions created under Sadat's *infitah* [open-door policy] institutions which mushroomed in the 1970s and which have been providing an exclusive service to the top 5 per cent of the country's population. Apolitical Islamic activism has thus developed a substantial socio-economic muscle through which it has managed to baffle the state and other secular forces in Egypt.[8]

In many cases, Islamicist objectives at present appear to be focused on establishing a dominant position among wider audiences, rather than winning control of power at the state level.[9] But high priority is attached by Islamist movements to the establishment of effective control over the administrative machinery of governments, as shown by the brief Jordanian brief experience of power sharing with the Islamists during 1990. Ambiguity surrounds the question of Hamas's dealings with the PLO on the issue of elections in the Occupied Territories.

The education sector is a particular target of Islamists' attention. Apart from its enormous potential to exert influence on the thinking of young Jordanians, the education sector offers significant opportunities for the distribution of favours (such as teacher transfers) and the harvesting of obligations. It allows the establishment of networks of contacts among the wider society. It is also an area where the concerns of the Western-oriented elite have least resonance among rural and conservative

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[7] Esposito, John L. *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* Oxford University Press, New York 1992, p. 23 and p. 100. In Gaza, Hamas reportedly provides free medical treatment, food, education and cash to its followers. The Australian 30 November 1994. In Egypt, Islamicist organisations also provide a sympathetic ear to the frustrations of under-employed professionals and university graduates.

[8] Quoted in Esposito, *op. cit.* pp. 132–3.

[9] According to a commentator on the outlook for Gaza, what Hamas wants "is what mainstream political Islam in the occupied territories has always wanted—less the soil of Palestine than the souls of its people." *Middle East International* 13 May 1994 p. 19. See also Esposito *op. cit.* pp. 99–100.

urban populations, and where the traditional respect accorded to teachers and figures of authority works to the Islamists' advantage.[10]

At present, particularly from the point of view of secular observers within the region, leaders and their security apparatus appear to be largely invulnerable to Islamicist political pressures, except perhaps over a very lengthy period. The more serious questions posed by Islamic extremism at this stage, and for the next few years, relate to its direct and indirect effects on the capacity of leaders and governments to rule effectively, under conditions which seem likely to work strongly to the advantage of their opponents.

Israel's Arab neighbours have maintained impressively high rates of economic growth since the Gulf War. Jordan's growth in real GDP in 1993 was 5.8 per cent, and growth is expected to continue at around that rate for the next few years.[11] Syria has experienced about 7 per cent growth since the early 1990s, largely on the strength of its oil exports.[12] Lebanon has begun to rebuild following the devastation of the civil war. Egypt is taking its first hesitant steps towards economic restructuring and may be capable of maintaining a reasonable level of economic equilibrium.[13]

Over the coming decades, however, each of the Arab economies mentioned above faces massive challenges in terms of developing the physical infrastructure required to meet the demands of their rising populations. The following estimates illustrate the scale of the problems ahead.

Middle East population growth
(in millions)[14]

Country	*1992*	*2025*
Egypt	55.26	90.36
Israel	5.23	6.91
Jordan	4.14	9.88
Lebanon	3.2	4.7
Syria	12.99	34.08

The countries of the region will also have to cope with the interrelated impacts of urbanisation, agricultural and environmental degradation.[15] One illustration of the severity of these problems is the suggestion that a half-meter rise in the Nile as global temperatures increase would displace 16 per cent of the Egyptian population.[16] According to another estimate, a one meter rise would take between 12 and 15 per cent of Egypt's arable land, and displace 8 million people.[17] The environmental security outlook for other

[10] The author is aware of an occasion at which a school prize giving ceremony in a rural area attended by a senior member of the Jordanian royal family was used by Islamic activists to distribute veils, ostensibly as a gift from the guest of honour.

[11] *Jordan Current Economic Bulletin* Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra. 1994.

[12] *Ha'aretz* 11 December 1994.

[13] Discussion with William Quandt, Brookings Institute, Washington April 1994

[14] Winnefeld and Morris *op. cit.* p. 37, based on *UN Demographic Yearbook,* 1992, and *World Fact Book* 1992.

[15] See Winnefeld and Morris *op. cit.* pp. 35-40.

[16] Matthews, Jessica T., "Redefining Security," *Foreign Affairs*,Vol. 58, Spring 1989, p. 170.

[17] Broadus, J. et al., "Rising Sea Level and Damming of Rivers: Possible Effects in Egypt and Bangladesh", in Titus, J. G. (ed.) *Effects of Changes in Stratospheric Ozone and Global Climate,Vol.4, Sea Level Rise*

Arab states surrounding Israel is scarcely less difficult so long as their rates of population growth and urbanisation remain at high levels, and they continue to pursue questionable agricultural and ecological policies. Though they have been seen traditionally as instruments for fulfilling popular expectations, Arab governments have not yet shown that they can meet such interlocking socio-economic challenges.

Creation of value-adding employment opportunities, particularly for university graduates, is a further formidable challenge. The issue is bound up in a range of social prejudices against some forms of employment, and the need to create employment opportunities in private industry rather than in the traditionally-favoured public sector and the professions. 70 per cent of the population of the Middle East is under 20 years old.[18]

Under conditions of growing economic, environmental and social stress, efforts to repress demand for political reform, without the concurrent development of processes through which political and economic changes can be achieved peacefully, can only increase the political volatility of the countries concerned. Economic growth, combined with careful attention to political reform and redistributive justice, is probably the only solution to the specific problems of dealing with radical Islam. Even if repression of the more obvious manifestations of that particular phenomenon proved possible in the short-term, it would probably come at enormous cost to domestic political and economic confidence. It would not address the malaise which has given rise to the Islamicist movement.

Israelis—and many figures within Arab elites as well—will need to accept that repression of Islamic radicalism *as a political movement* cannot be a viable alternative open to Arab leaderships for the forseeable future. Repression has had a severe effect on secular opposition parties in some countries, without appearing to weaken significantly the grass roots level performance of more committed and professionally-organised Islamic radicals.[19] Existing leaderships are unlikely to capture the political force behind the demands for social justice which are now being harnessed by their Islamicist opponents.

Whether the Islamicists ultimately will prevail over the secular Arab mainstream is an open question, and one which is beyond the scope of this study. If they do so, it is equally unclear whether they will reconcile tradition with modernity, will prove open to compromise and accommodation, or will become increasingly dogmatic and anti-democratic in their political orientation. But in the short term, the actual impact of

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Washington D.C., 1986 cited in Kennedy, Paul *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century* Harper Collins: London 1993 p. 110.

[18] The statistic was quoted by Judith Kipper of the Brookings Institution at a seminar organised by the New Israel Fund, Los Angeles 23 April 1994 which was attended by the author.

[19] In Tunisia, for example, the government has had to guarantee opposition parties representation in 19 seats out of a total of 163. In March 1994 the governing party (the Democratic Constitutional Assembly) won all 144 seats in the 25 electoral districts with between 94 and 98 per cent of the votes cast. The six opposition parties which were allowed to contest each won an average of one per cent of the vote. President Ben Ali was the only presidential candidate, and won more than 99 per cent of the vote.

democratisation will probably depend, more than any other factor, on whether existing governments develop the economic momentum and the political capacity to tailor strategies of accommodation and resistance to Islamic radicalism.[20]

The conundrum facing regional leaderships is that the economic progress, which will be needed to prevent evolutionary change developing into something more dangerous, is unlikely to be within reach in conditions of continuing instability between Israel and the Arab world. Access to investment capital (particularly from private Arab sources), and foreign direct investment, are linked in various ways to perceptions of regional political prospects.[21] So too is access to competitive technology, marketing and skills. Large-scale debt rescheduling and direct official aid is related, in practice, to the extent to which particular countries are regarded as contributing to peace with Israel. At present, the region has far greater capital outflow than capital inflow, because of domestic policies, debt overhang and political tensions. Only a combination of reduced tension and economic restructuring will see a significant change in that ratio.[22]

The reality for Arab leaderships, therefore, is that to meet their national objectives they need to move into new and more satisfying relations with the West. Depending on particular local circumstances, most leaderships concerned to address their national interests will have strong incentives not to be constrained by the outcomes of the Palestinian issue. The historical record, at least, would also seem to support the view that when leaders are forced to choose between Palestinian interests and those of their nation, the latter generally prevail. [23] The leaders of Arab states of the

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[20] It should be noted, however, that the consequences of political success by radical Islamicists may be far-reaching. In analysing Islamic radicalism among Palestinians, Ziad Abu Amr of Bir Zeit University points out that Islamists accept the notion of pluralism, in the absence of an Islamic rule, because it is imposed on them by popular Palestinian desire for a united approach. Islamists accept the notion of democracy in a non-Islamic order, moreover, "because Islam can thrive under democracy more than it does under dictatorship." But, according to Abu Amr, "...democracy is rejected as a Western concept because it does not provide for a just system that fits all societies. Once the Islamic society and Islamic rule are established, political parties which embrace non-Islamic ideologies will not be tolerated. Only Islamic groups which take Islam as their frame of reference and the Koran as their constitution will be allowed to voice their own different interpretations of Islamic principles or teachings." Abu Amr, Ziad "Civil Society and Democratization in Palestine" (paper presented at the Second Cairo Seminar on Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World December 9–11 1993) *Civil Society* Ibn Khaldoun Center for Development Studies, Cairo Vol. 3, No. 26 February 1994 p. 28.

[21] Estimates among diplomats and analysts of the extent of private Egyptian funds held off-shore are around $US 50–60 billion (confidential sources). Lebanese funds may be of a similar magnitude. The Palestine Development Fund, a private sector investment fund for projects in the Occupied Territories which was established in Jordan following the Declaration of Principles in 1993 quickly raised an initial capital of $200 million, and was expected to increase that amount to $1 billion within three years. (Discussion with Michel Marto, Deputy Governor, Central Bank of Jordan, May 1994).

[22] Discussion with Michel Marto, May 1994.

[23] For example, Emir Abdullah of Jordan sought to reach workable arrangements with the Zionist movement from the 1930s onward, not only to enhance his kingdom's security but also to place restrictions on Palestinian nationalist aspirations as advanced by Haj Amin al Husseini. See Shlaim, Avi *Collusion Across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement and the Partition of Palestine* Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1988 *passim*. The Arab states demonstrated during the Lebanon war and the intifada their reluctance to involve themselves in the defence of the Palestinians. President Asad has made it clear in private, and almost as explicitly in public, that from Syria's point of view the achievement of peace between Syria and

Maghreb and the Persian Gulf have not taken a high profile on the subject of Israel, generally attaching a higher priority to their dealings with Europe and the United States respectively. The question is whether audiences will share that approach.

Audiences

Perhaps the single most important political reference point for Arabs of any background is the sense of historical injustice against Arabs which flows from the creation of Israel and its support from the West. The issue is highly significant in terms of its human and intellectual impact. It provokes debate about Arab leadership and political goals.[24] The emotions it generates on related questions such as sovereignty over Jerusalem go well beyond the Arab world.

Perceptions of Israel among Arab populations appear to vary, however, according to the degree of active contact, historical grievance and other factors peculiar to the group in question, including their dealings with the Palestinians. Antipathy towards Palestinians extends deep into the societies of many Arab states, reflected in informal discrimination at many levels. There are also important differences of political style and personality between the PLO leadership under Yasser Arafat and most other Arab leaders.[25] Bickering at the leadership level can affect popular perceptions of the Palestinians' right to demand wider Arab support.

At more sophisticated levels of political awareness, there are at least some important factors encouraging fresh thinking. One factor is the desire mentioned in the preceding chapter of a significant part of the Arab intelligentsia and Arab political elites to rectify misperceptions concerning the Arab world. The fact that the Palestinian struggle has had to be directed against Israel, with its reserves of political and moral support in the United States and elsewhere, has been perceived as a major impediment to the right of Arabs to be seen as a people of remarkable intellectual and social attainment. Imagery associating Islamic radicalism with the Palestinian movement, including with the terrorist period of the 1970s and more recently with the rhetoric and terrorist activities of Islamic Jihad and Hamas; the damage done to the Arab image by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait; and simplistic, religio-historical interpretations of the Arab–Israel dispute fuel frustrations

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Israel does not hinge on the outcome of the Palestinian issue, but on the return of occupied territory. See "Asad on the Israel–PLO Accord" *Middle East Quarterly* March 1994 p. 84. US officials in Washington in April 1994 provided confidential briefing to the author on the Syrian position which supported this analysis.

[24] Seale records a conversation with Mansur al Atrash as follows:
"Sultan Pasha al Atrash, the Druze chieftain who, with a handful of horsemen had fought the French army in the 1920s was on his deathbed when Israel extended its law to the Golan, a traditional area of Druze settlement. [Mansur] heard the old man exclaim "God curse them!". "Curse whom?" Mansur asked. "The Arabs!" "What have the Arabs done?" "Nothing! They do nothing! Israel takes their land and they don't move. They have planes, they have guns, they have money, but they do nothing! I spit on these rich Arabs!" Seale, P., *op. cit.* p. 373.

[25] Personality differences between Asad and Arafat are just one example of many such contrasts between Arafat and other Arab leaders. In regard to style, a good example is how Arafat, on telling President Bourguiba of Tunisia that he was going to carry a gun and an olive branch when addressing the UN General Assembly, was advised by Bourguiba to leave the gun behind and to carry two olive branches instead. Conversation with Marwan al- Kasem, Political Adviser to HM King Hussein, Amman June 1994.

generated by the apparent reluctance of the Western media and some analysts to deal with the realities of the Middle East on an informed basis. In the experience of this author, neither ancient history nor religious differences are established in the minds of leaders and audiences in the region as being of even remotely comparable contemporary importance to the region's conflicts as the political and moral issues central to the Arab–Israel dispute. And yet there is abundant evidence of a tendency among many Western scholars to fall into traps of historicism and commentary about religious diversity when discussing the Middle East.[26]

The Egyptian analyst Abdel-Alim Mohamed writes that

> The Arab world believes that in the eyes of the West it is the new black sheep and that Islam is the new enemy—a substitute for communism and socialism—perceived as threatening Western life styles and values. Such fears are produced and fuelled by Western think tanks and research centres, and are borne out by events in [Bosnia].[27]

A further factor, but from a different perspective within the Arab world, is the broadening of the focus of Arab political debate to encompass a much wider range of issues than Palestine. The popular appeal of the Palestinian predicament poses a genuine intellectual, moral and political dilemma for Arab leaderships, elites and intellectuals alike. But there is also evidence of frustration among Arab intellectuals with those fellow Arabs who have failed to explore the roots of Arab problems beyond the political and moral dimension of the Palestinian issue. The Palestinian Israeli novelist Emile Habibi, defending the idea of normalisation of cultural dealings with Israel, has commented that

> The Arab psyche is wandering without a hero, a Palestinian hero...The tragedy of Arab writers is that they found singing the praises of the Palestinian hero is easier for them than facing up to real challenges.[28]

In a similar vein, the critique by Kanan Makiya of the alleged silence of Arab intellectuals over the evils of totalitarianism in Iraq provides a provocative view of the standards of political discourse within Arab societies.[29] Shboul, also, points to a sustained movement among Arab creative writers and thinkers since the 1967 defeat, and the upheavals which have followed

> ...to lay bare to themselves and to their people the inner contradictions, dichotomies and conflicts of the Arab political and cultural body...[arguing that] certain areas of

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[26] A prime example of this is Huntington, S., "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 72, No. 3 Summer 1993 pp. 22–49. Apart from its conceptual shortcomings, the suggestion by Huntington that consciousness of cultural identity carries with it a tendency toward competition for territory and power would be deeply offensive to many secular Moslems and Arab Christians—if Huntington's work was widely known in the region. Aside from Huntington, authors such as Daniel Pipes (*The Long Shadow: Culture and Politics in the Middle East*) and David Pryce-Jones (*The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs*) also display this rather curious tendency, while Jimmy Carter entitled his recollections of Middle East diplomacy *The Blood of Abraham*. Even Geoffrey Kemp refers to the strife between Canaanites and Israelites when discussing current strategic issues. *op. cit.* p. 20.

[27] Mohamed, Abdel-Alim *op. cit.* p.11.

[28] *Jordan Times* 16 May 1994 p. 10.

[29] Kanan Makiya (Samir al-Khalil) *op. cit.* pp. 18–22.

> Arab history and culture can no longer be kept beyond the reach of examination, 'unthought of...' [30]

An important question is whether the trend identified by Nakhleh and Shboul towards more intense pursuit of issues of political identity, of democratic reform, and of imbalances in the Arab political order may be capable of crowding out the Palestinian agenda among overall Arab priorities. The evidence for and against that possibility is far from conclusive while the core political issues between Israel and the Palestinians remain to be addressed. Some issues, such as Jerusalem, may prove capable of galvanising new levels of Arab support behind the Palestinian position. But some well-informed analysts, who are certainly not hostile to the Palestinians, would deny the notion that the Palestinian cause can upset an increasingly stable equilibrium between Israel and the Arab states.

Benvenisti, for example, believes such notions are "maintained only by a minority of ideologically motivated observers" in Israel and the West. He contends that the Palestinians themselves have given up that hope.[31] Shai Feldman argues that the adoption of a nuclear posture by Israel, if accompanied by a "flexible political posture", would be likely to deter Arab states from attempting to compel Israel to withdraw from the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Egypt, Syria and Iraq, he believes, are "unlikely to risk Israeli nuclear retaliation against their cities and values on behalf of the Palestinian cause."[32]

In view of the historical record, and in the absence of compelling evidence to the contrary, it would be safest to assume that, although emotionally attached to the Palestinian cause as an Arab issue, Arab audiences and leaderships are likely to display varying degrees of commitment to the Palestinian agenda.

Israel and the Palestinians

There is little hope for developing positive and constructive approaches to cooperation between Palestinians and Israelis before the causes of fundamental political tensions between them are addressed. The issues to be resolved, moreover, appear to defy consensual solutions at this stage. As *The Economist* commented at the time of the Oslo accord, peace is seldom achieved without justice, and rival views of what that would mean in the Middle East are probably irreconcilable.[33]

William Zartman has suggested that the resolution of conflict requires the interests of the parties to be shaped through discussion and negotiation into a common understanding of the problem, with a solution arrived at after the elimination of possible alternatives. He emphasises that "...agreement between the parties is not enough: the formula must satisfy the demands of the conflict as well if it is to be a

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[30] Shboul *op. cit.* pp. 10–11.

[31] Benvenisti, M., "Peace Process and Intercommunal Strife" in Kipper and Saunders *op. cit.* p. 41.

[32] Feldman, S. *Israeli Nuclear Deterrence: A Strategy for the 1980s* Colombia University Press, New York, 1982 p. 120.

[33] *The Economist* 4 September 1993 p. 13.

resolving formula".[34] Zartman argues that the necessary elements for the "ripening" process in such situations include the collapse of the original rules and institutions ("regimes") surrounding an issue; the elimination of alternative regimes; the readjustment of power relations among the parties; and the identification of a resolving formula, including a transitional formula to a new regime.[35]

In the Palestinian–Israel context, some of these elements are emerging, but only to a limited extent at this stage. The readjustment of power relations between the parties has a long way to go, the shape of a new regime is not yet discernible, and audiences on all sides are sceptical about the possibility of achieving peace on an equitable basis. It is important to examine the reasons for this situation, and the prospects for change, in some detail.

Nationalism and security

Nationalism and security are closely linked to each other in the Palestinian–Israeli context, because each side sees its security in existential terms which demand the establishment or the preservation of its own state. Political objectives and security objectives in this situation are intertwined.

For Israelis, nationalism demands a secure Jewish state, and guarantees of the unchanging nature of that state as an embodiment and refuge of Judaism. It demands control over Jerusalem as the single most important political and spiritual reference point of the state. It requires acceptance of Israel by other states of the region on nothing less than those terms.

For Palestinians, nationalism demands a politically secure Palestinian state, with both the institutions and the symbols of statehood, and full control over the land within its borders. Like Israelis, Palestinians believe that their identity as a people cannot be assured on any other basis. It is axiomatic for the Palestinians that East (traditionally predominantly Arab) Jerusalem will be the capital of the Palestinian state. Palestinian nationalism also demands compensation or the right of return for Palestinians dispossessed in 1948 and 1967.[36]

Although they do not outweigh the forces for political moderation embodied in the existing Israeli and PLO leaderships, the arguments advanced by extreme nationalists on both sides endeavour to take these positions further. Within Israel there are calls for annexation of occupied territory into Eretz Israel, and for Jordan to become the Palestinian state. The messianic Jewish settler group Gush Emunim

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[34] Zartman, I. William "Alternative Attempts at Crisis Management: Concepts and Processes" in Winham, G. (ed.) *New Issues in International Crisis Management* Westview Press, Boulder and London, 1988 p. 200 and p. 205.

[35] *Ibid.* p. 210.

[36] Benvenisti claims that "what frightens [Israelis] is the return (al awdah) of Palestinians, and the principle is even more feared than the actual return... 'The Return' would be the *raison d'être* of the state of Palestine, just as it is the fundamental credo of the state of Israel, no matter how many would actually return. Palestinian national objectives, just like Zionist objectives, would not be completely realised by independence and would produce messianic and chauvinistic impulses as powerful as any produced by the Zionist movement..." *op. cit.* p. 52

explain the Israeli victory of 1967 as the work of the hand of God. They insist that reuniting the two halves of the land of Israel represents the necessary first stage for the redemption of the Jewish people and ultimately universal redemption. To give up the land of Israel, they argue, would be to reject the mandate of God.[37] Edward Said has pointed to the damaging impact on relations between Palestinians and Israelis of those Zionists, particularly from the United States, who see themselves as redeeming Palestine for the Jewish people as against non-Jews.[38] On the Palestinian side, and among radical Islamic sentiment in the wider Arab world, there are those who deny Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state, and who contend that its territory should be under Palestinian sovereignty. The aftermath of terrorist events invariably produces racially provocative outbursts from both sides.

Neither Israeli nor Palestinian extremists appear troubled by the patent impracticality of their goals. Opposed as they may be, there is a degree of symbiosis between the two groups. Religious extremism probably plays a part in inspiring maximalist demands on both sides. Territorial claims of expansionist Israelis have fuelled the rejectionist posture of radical Arabs. The reverse may also apply.[39]

The national aspirations of Israelis and Palestinians focus not only on outcomes or achievements. They also make the political symbols and processes of ethnic struggle and self-realisation of particular importance. As Lawson has noted, in regard to ethno-nationalist movements generally, claims to legitimacy and to sovereignty are combined with a collective social memory which recalls past injustices and demands their rectification. There is a "need to demonstrate authenticity in opposition to external dominating alternatives".[40]

Lawson also notes, in discussing ethno-nationalist movements generally, that

> ...when the politicisation of ethnic identity reaches a certain threshold, then a new moral universe is created in which the ideology of nationalism determines the *raison*

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[37] According to Thomas Friedman, Gush rabbis have taken the position that so long as Israelis believed in the redemptive mission of the Jewish people returning to their homeland, they "could hold whatever they wanted and ignore whatever anyone else wanted..." Friedman notes Likud under Prime Minister Begin found the Gush line "enchanting" because of its all or nothing outlook, and because Gush ideology provided Likud with an interpretation of history which allowed the Likud to believe it could have it all. Friedman *op. cit.* p. 264.

[38] Said writes, in the aftermath of the Hebron massacre
"As if the deliberately fanned flames of communal violence have not been enough, there has been added to it a particularly virulent and specifically American component: settlers from North America who have come to Israel bringing as their contribution a horrendous, yet deeply typical combination of ideological heedlessness and very ugly, very indiscriminate and relentlessly bloody-minded violence. Baruch Goldstein is not so exceptional or particularly unusual a case. He was a man steeped in the long-distance fantasies of a Jewish revival in Israel that were cultivated with devastating results in America well before he actually set foot in Israel."
Said, Edward "Reflections on the Hebron Massacre" *Civil Society* April 1994 p. 26.

[39] Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan has suggested this symbiotic relationship. See El Hassan bin Talal "A Jordanian Perspective on the United States in the Middle East" in Kipper and Saunders, *op. cit.* p. 287. Edward Said's comments mentioned above about the dangers of "political Judaism...redeeming the land of Palestine for the Jewish people as against non-Jews" are also relevant.

[40] Lawson, Stephanie *The Politics of Authenticity: Ethnonationalist Conflict and the State* (Working paper No. 125, Peace Research Centre, Research School of Pacific Studies, ANU Canberra 1992) pp. 23–4.

> *d'être* of the conflict. And it is the investment of the particular moral-cultural element in the ethnonationalist identity that makes the task of conflict resolution in these situations so difficult...The politics of authenticity generates a closed universe of identity and affiliation, which at the same time operates logically as an exclusionary device.[41]

Seen from that perspective, the nationalist movements of Israelis and Palestinians have provided

> ...a pedigree which allows identification with heroic times, great deeds and a genealogy to the beginning of things human, cultural and spiritual...[The] future preservation of the group and its continuity with tradition is enjoined on [individuals]...and determines their joint trajectory.[42]

On both sides, appeals to cultural-traditional symbols also serve to obscure the machinations of political activists and the privileges they have accrued. As one commentator on the behaviour of ideologically-motivated Jewish settlers noted in *The Observer* in the wake of the Hebron massacre, even the mad have their patrons and fellow travellers.[43]

Among the Palestinians, historical grievances towards Israel are coloured by experience of human rights abuse ranging from arbitrary arrests and detention at the discretion of military commanders, often accompanied by physical maltreatment, to various forms of collective punishment. According to official Israeli figures, by mid-December 1994 1183 Palestinians had been killed by Israelis in intifada-related violence. 717 Palestinians had been killed by other Palestinians. Palestinian analysts estimated in 1985 that 200,000 Palestinians, or around one in every five Palestinians in the West Bank, had been arrested or detained by Israeli forces at some stage.[44] Demolition and sealing of homes, the closure for extended periods of schools and universities, curfews and other restrictions on movement (including the prevention of harvesting activity) have had severe effects on the Palestinian population. A generation appears to have been lost among a people whose prospects and pride rest in their educational attainments, professional and managerial skills. There is deep resentment of armed Jewish settlers and the General Security Service (GSS).

From a Palestinian perspective, Israeli attitudes towards the Palestinians are a further, fundamental problem. In the words of one leading Palestinian academic:

> ...beyond the material elements of power that have helped to determine [Israeli attitudes] there appears to lie a somewhat diffuse and unique combination of fear, guilt, condescension and—for want of a better word—contempt. [45]

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[41] *Ibid.* p. 12.

[42] *Ibid.* pp. 22–3.

[43] *Guardian Weekly* 13 March 1994.

[44] Shehadeh, Raja *Occupier's Law: Israel and the West Bank* Al Haq, the West Bank Affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists 1985 p. 141.

[45] Khalidi, Ahmad S., *Gaza/Jericho and the Uncertain Prospects for Peace* Royal Institute of International Affairs Middle East Programme Briefing Paper No. 8, April 1994 p. 5.

Palestinian perceptions are also strongly influenced by observation of Israeli political calculus and territorial expansion into the future Palestinian state. At the time of the election of the Likud government in 1977 there were 5,000 Jewish settlers in the West Bank. Numbers increased to 52,000 by 1985 and to close to 100,000 by 1991, with another 130,000 in what used to be East Jerusalem and about 20,000 in the Golan Heights and Gaza Strip.[46] According to "unofficial Israeli sources" quoted by the World Bank, in 1992 there were about 136 settlements in the West Bank with 130,000 inhabitants, and 17 settlements in Gaza with a population of 4,000 to 5,000.[47] Land seizures have continued since the signature of the Oslo accords with the PLO, and Israel reportedly has declared 70 per cent of the West Bank as "state land".[48] Although the rate of growth in the number of Jews in the Occupied Territories other than East Jerusalem has declined in recent years, according to the Israeli Chief Statistician the rate of increase in 1993 was 10 per cent, to reach a total of 116,000.[49]

The expansion of Jerusalem into the West Bank under the Labor government of Prime Minister Rabin has been particularly striking.[50] A recent estimate puts the number of Israelis who have settled in East Jerusalem since 1967 at 162,000.[51] East Jerusalem is being rapidly Judaised to prevent the Palestinians claiming the East of the city as their capital. It has been reported that Israeli planners intend to increase the number of Jews living in Jerusalem by 70,000 over the next two years to create an 80 per cent Jewish majority, in the biggest housing drive since the creation of Israel.[52]

Conflict and insecurity

Although it is a real and bitter conflict, and one which is deeply felt among Palestinian families who bear its burden, the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis is not reflected in unremitting physical violence. The extent of routine

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[46] *The Economist* 5 October 1991 p. 51.

[47] World Bank *Developing the Occupied Territories: An Investment in Peace* World Bank Washington DC September 1993, Vol. 1: Overview p. 10.

[48] Sarah Helm, *The Independent* published in *The Canberra Times* 7 January 1995 p. 12.

[49] *Jerusalem Post International Edition* week ending 26 November 1994 p. 24. Jewish settlers claim the number of Jewish residents of "Gaza, Judea and Samaria" increased by 5 per cent in 1994, to a total of 141,000. *Jerusalem Post International Edition* week ending 21 January 1995. p. 3.

[50] Annexed Jerusalem is already three times the size of Israeli West Jerusalem; "metropolitan Jerusalem" is larger still and dormitory suburb settlements such as Male Edumin will not be removed. Infilling from Jerusalem to the settlement of Efrat, 15 kilometres from Hebron will mean that Jewish settlements will dominate almost 50 per cent of the southern half of the West Bank. According to Ahmad Khalidi, an Israeli plan to create a "Greater Metropolitan Jerusalem" over and beyond the extended municipal boundaries unilaterally annexed in 1967 includes the 10 new Jewish neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem and another 20 settlements within a 100 square mile radius. Such a plan will push municipal boundaries eastwards virtually to Jericho. Khalidi, A. S. *op. cit.* p. 5. Reports in the Arab press in early January 1995 indicated that Israel plans to construct 23,000 new housing units beyond the 1967 border, with about half of them in East Jerusalem. *Ha'aretz,* 10 January 1995.

[51] *The Guardian Weekly* 16 October 1994, quoting an estimate by the American Foundation for Peace in the Middle East.

[52] *Canberra Times* 7 January 1995.

interaction between Israelis and Palestinians is easily underestimated. In 1991, wage income from Israel accounted for 24 per cent of GNP of the Occupied Territories; exports to Israel accounted for 9 per cent of GNP and imports from Israel were 40 per cent of GNP. During that year 97,000 Palestinians were employed in Israel, mostly on a daily commute basis in construction industries as unskilled and semi-skilled labourers.[53] There is anecdotal evidence that Palestinian households in Hebron and Nablus provide most of the labour for the Israeli footwear and clothing industries, in which Israeli entrepreneurs finish and market the final products.

Palestinian economic dependence on Israel as a source of employment, and as the principal market for Palestinian agricultural products, is inevitable for the foreseeable future. It is also widely recognised that, as well as introducing the possibility of Palestinian self-determination, the Oslo accords and the Cairo agreement have tied the political fortunes of the PLO and Israeli Labor leaderships together. At the popular level, both Israelis and Palestinians find aspects of the agreements between their leaderships objectionable. But Israelis are not keen to reassert control over Gaza. And, on the Palestinian side, both the PLO and Hamas have more to gain than to lose by seeing Palestinian self-rule succeed in bringing about an indefinite end to Israeli military rule in the West Bank and Gaza.

The factors mentioned above have tempered the risks of large-scale violence between the two sides. But the power imbalance between Palestinians and Israelis, and the rarity of contact between them on neutral terms, have combined to produce a visceral mutual distaste and a strong desire for separation.[54] There are deep-rooted fears on both sides for their physical security following terrorist attacks in Hebron, Afula, Tel Aviv, Netanya and elsewhere.

Among the consequences of this antipathy and anxiety is a reluctance among Palestinians to grasp the importance of confidence-building gestures toward Israelis across all levels of interaction as a means of progressing their political goals. The psychological gap is too vast, and the political consequences of such activity are too uncertain, to make such activity a serious option for most Palestinians. This is particularly true for those who are from a generation which has been hardened by Israeli harassment, and who have had little positive exposure to Israelis.[55] Many

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[53] World Bank *Developing the Occupied Territories op. cit.* pp.4–5.

[54] According to Benvenisti, "...[in] the shared homeland there exist two cohesive national communities, engaged in a total civil war that by now has become a way of life, an endemic and organic condition". *op. cit.* p. 53. This claim has to be balanced, of course, against the efforts of groups on both sides to engender a sense of mutuality between Israelis and Palestinians. Examples of this include the activity of feminist groups such as Women in Black and the Haifa Women's Centre; and efforts of institutions such as the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute to foster contacts between Israelis and Palestinians.
In discussions with the author at Bir Zeit University in June 1994, academic administrators noted that although facilities were available to Arab students at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, it was unthinkable among Palestinian students that they would use such facilities. No Israeli academic had visited Bir Zeit, nor could such visitors be received at the campus because of fears for their security.

[55] Finkelstein, Norman "Reflections on Palestinian Attitudes during the Gulf War" *Journal of Palestine Studies* XXI, no. 3 Spring 1992, pp. 54–70. Finkelstein writes the following on Palestinian attitudes, based

Palestinians fail to see that Israelis scrutinise Palestinian behaviour (at a distance) with as much energy as Palestinians observe Israelis for evidence of gaps between rhetoric and reality. Few Palestinians would seem to care what Israelis concluded about them anyway.

Benvenisti makes a point which has been alluded to by other observers of the Palestinian street, when he comments that Yasser Arafat would like to believe that he is a Palestinian Ben-Gurion. But, he continues,

> ...the 'real' Palestinian Ben-Gurion now lives in a refugee camp near Nablus. He is a 22 year-old youngster—perhaps now busy trying to organise a new 'shock force' after members of previous units were arrested by the Israelis. He is a realist to the marrow, and he knows what Ben-Gurion also knew in his twenties: National independence is attained by stubbornly building economic, social, educational and military communal power and not through declarations and speeches in exclusive international clubs. [56]

Many Israelis appear to have difficulty coming to terms with, or understanding the scepticism among Palestinians concerning Israeli goals. From an Israeli perspective, agreement to place the security of Israel in the hands of the Palestinian authorities in Gaza and Jericho; willingness to accept a role for international observers in Hebron and under the terms of the Cairo agreement; and acceptance of the principle of early empowerment and elections for the Palestinians all represent significant gestures from their side. They represent major departures from previous insistence on total Israeli control of all issues bearing on Israeli security.

There is also a strong inclination among Israeli officials and analysts to dismiss the resentment Palestinians feel about the imbalance of power between the two sides. For many Israelis, that resentment is something for the PLO leadership to deal with, and strictly within the terms of the Cairo Agreement at that.[57] Such an approach is, in part, a reflection of the degree of separation and, in some cases, antipathy between the two sides. It is also, of course, a reflection of the political constraints facing the Israeli leadership, which has had to fight hard to maintain a mandate to make any concessions at all to the PLO on security issues.

The degree of insecurity felt among Israelis should not be overlooked in assessing the likelihood of mutual perceptions changing. In general, the Israeli public has viewed the likelihood of war as receding, and the hope for peace or absence of war

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on his experiences in Bayt Sahur:
"So why did you cheer the Scud missiles?", I asked Qa'id, an agricultural engineer, again. We were speaking in Fawwar, the refugee camp near Hebron where he lived. Outside, Israeli soldiers were passing through in a jeep, announcing yet another curfew as they shot teargas cannisters and sound bombs into houses. Everyone in the room was hugging the wall. Everyone, that is, except a three-year-old standing on the window sill and shouting "Stone them!" as she shook her fist. Qa'id replied that the Scud attacks were the first time he saw panic in the eyes of the Israelis. "I wanted them to feel the same panic they caused me." Musa's six-year-old daughter, Marwa, said that she was "happy Saddam sent missiles to Israel because Israel killed many of us, sent Baba (Daddy) to prison and beat us." Musa... had served three 6-month stints of administrative detention (once apparently for keeping me as a guest) and had been repeatedly humiliated, beaten and tortured. *op. cit.* pp. 54–5.

[56] Benvenisti *op. cit.* p. 53. Benvenisti might have added that the Palestinian role model he describes may now also have radical Islamic connections.

[57] Confidential sources.

as increasing. Levels of concern, however are still high. Only 35 per cent of Israelis responding to a survey conducted by the Jaffee Institute in January–February 1994 thought the PLO would be able to control terrorism. Thirty-two per cent of those interviewed said they thought that ultimately the Arabs wanted to destroy Israel and kill Jews. When forced to choose between peace talks and strengthening military capacity in order to avoid war with Arab states, only 52 per cent chose peace talks.[58] In the words of one analyst, "Israelis above all want security; they do not so much want peace *with* the Palestinians as peace *from* the Palestinians."[59]

In assessing the prospects for the peace process, it is important to bear in mind the reluctance of Israelis to see negotiations take place on such core issues as sovereignty, Jerusalem and the right to return. The following table underlines the extent of that opposition, as well as trends within it:

Support for discussing in talks with Palestinians[60]

	1990 (per cent)	1993 (per cent)	1994 (per cent)
Autonomy	61	69	na
A Jordanian–Palestinian federation	34	48	57
Demilitarised areas evacuated by IDF	46	55	57
A Palestinian state in some of the area with acceptable security arrangements for Israel	na	45	51
Removing Jewish settlements	32	43	50
An independent Palestinian state	26	30	41
East Jerusalem	13	17	14
The right of return	9	12	14

Support for *discussion* of the right to return and East Jerusalem is especially weak. And, although support is strengthening for discussion of the right of return issue (from a very low base), such willingness has moved backwards from 1993 to 1994 so far as Jerusalem is concerned. Along with Gush Etzion and Western Samaria, East Jerusalem also stands out among the territories that Israelis are unwilling to relinquish. Research by the Jaffee Centre in January-February 1994 concerning the preparedness of Israelis to give up territory in particular locations shows the following:

[58] Arian, A., *Israeli Security and the Peace Process: Public Opinion in 1994* Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies Tel Aviv University 1994 pp. 2–3 and p. 6. Asked how worried they were that they or members of their family would be injured by terrorist action, those interviewed replied as follows: very worried 37 per cent; worried 39 per cent; not worried 18 per cent; and not at all worried 6 per cent.

[59] Clawson, P. *Middle East Quarterly* Vol. 1, No. 1, March 1994 p. 78.

[60] Arian *op. cit.* p. 11.

Gaza Strip (per cent)	Arab urban areas (per cent)	Western Samaria (per cent)	Jordan Valley (per cent)	Gush Etzion (per cent)	East Jerusalem (per cent)
84	42	18	30	14	10

When asked about the idea of allowing the Palestinians to have their capital in a unified Jerusalem which was the capital of Israel, 85 per cent of Israelis rejected the idea.[61]

The Israeli–Palestinian outlook

On some aspects of these issues, the passage of time may make progress towards compromise outcomes easier. The numbers of "non-ideological" Jewish settlers in the West Bank (excluding Jerusalem) are expected by some observers to decline dramatically as soon as domestic political considerations allow financial compensation to be offered to those who wish to depart. One American analyst suggests a decrease over the next ten years to around 30,000. Some Israeli analysts privately suggest even lower figures are likely, perhaps to as low as 15,000.[62] Minor adjustments to the 1967 border could place a number of the settlements within Israel proper, although, as discussed in the next chapter, the question of relinquishing direct control over the water resources in those localities is a very sensitive issue for Israelis. Around 85 per cent of the West Bank Jewish settlers reside in ten urban areas clustered around Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.[63] "Strategic settlements" along the Jordan River appear to be of marginal strategic value, particularly under conditions of peace with Jordan and if a stable security relationship exists with the Palestinians.

Time will also reduce the numbers of 1948 refugees physically capable of returning to Israel on a permanent basis, even if some arrangement could be made to permit this on the basis of family reunion. Research by Sarah Roy has found that the overwhelming majority of her respondents acknowledged that any notion of reclaiming their original homes now inside Israel had to be abandoned if a political resolution to the conflict was to be achieved.[64] The obliteration of some Arab villages from the landscape of Israel has made return in some cases a futile exercise.[65]

While the obstacles to peace-building are important, they can also be seen against a broader perspective which is more favourable to the development of Zartman's idea

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[61] *Ibid.* p. 12.

[62] Confidential sources.

[63] Friedman *op. cit.* p. 517.

[64] Roy, Sarah "Changing Political Attitudes among Gaza Refugees" *Journal of Palestine Studies* Vol. 19 No. 1 1989 p. 79.

[65] See Morris, Benny *op. cit.* pp. viii–xviii..

of the "ripe moment". Among leaders on both sides, at least, there has been a discarding of simplistic solutions. The intifada, and the decision of the Jordanian leadership in July 1988 to sever administrative and legal links with the West Bank has forced the Israelis to confront the Palestinian collective directly. The illusion of a "Jordanian option" and the perception of the conflict with the Palestinians as an Israeli–Arab interstate dispute have had to be abandoned. Although they may differ sharply, Israel and the PLO cannot readily de-legitimate one another since the Oslo accords. There is little prospect of the recurrence of the bipolar global power framework which was exploited by Israel to preserve its advantageous relationship with the United States.

The mass mobilisation of Palestinians which characterised the first few years of the intifada has subsided. While the long term impact of Islamic radicalism is unpredictable, a full-scale resumption of the intifada is not seen as likely, at least in the next few years, by Palestinian analysts and other close observers of ordinary Palestinians.[66] But terrorist violence against Israelis, and the long-term impact of military service in highly ambiguous circumstances in the Occupied Territories have helped to break down the insularity of Israelis from the political realities of the West Bank and Gaza. From the beginning of the intifada on 9 December 1987 until the signing of the Declaration of Principles with the PLO on 13 September 1993, 160 Israelis were killed by Palestinians. A further 115 died by 13 December 1994.[67]

Despite opposition to the idea, recognition of the likelihood that a Palestinian state will be established alongside Israel at some stage in the next decades has become more widespread in Israeli public opinion. According to the polling of the Jaffee Institute, that assessment has doubled since 1990. In 1990, 37 per cent of the Israelis interviewed believed that a Palestinian state in the territories would eventually be established. In 1991 that figure rose to 48 per cent, and in 1994 it had reached 74 per cent.[68] The expectation that a Palestinian state in some form was now inevitable became widespread among Israeli analysts and academics following the Oslo agreement between Israel and the PLO.[69] The intifada had already brought many Israelis to believe they could not rule 1.2 million Palestinians forever.[70]

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[66] Confidential sources.

[67] Corresponding figures for Palestinians killed by Israeli Security Forces were 963 to the signing of the DOP; and 104 to 13 December 1994. Palestinians killed by other Palestinians in the same periods were 960 to the signing of the DOP, and 107 to 13 December 1994. (Israeli Embassy, Canberra).

[68] Arian *op. cit.* p. 6.

[69] There was a remarkable degree of unanimity on this point during discussions with a wide range of academics and analysts during May 1994. Opinions varied regarding the implications of, and appropriate responses to such an eventuality, rather than over whether it would happen.

[70] Shimon Peres writes:

"Israel is now administering two parallel government systems with contradictory sets of values. By its very nature the military government is oppressive—to the people it rules and to the citizens of the state. It is the very antithesis of the basic, democratic values set down in Israel's Declaration of Independence, in our basic laws, our political culture, and in our social worldview. Zionism arose to right the injustices inflicted on the Jews, and to give the Jews basic human rights. Therefore, our coercive rule of another nation and forcible control of public order in an area under military rule affects not only the performance of the governmental

On the Palestinian side, research by Roy in Gaza during 1988 points towards the emergence of a new political paradigm among the Palestinian community. This paradigm is characterised by desire for political compromise, which is based on a dilution of the Palestinian claim to all of Palestine. Roy found that several factors have contributed to this realisation. In Gaza, the reasons include:

> ...prolonged deprivation and suffering, threats to the family unit and societal cohesion, fears for the future of Palestinian children, a reassessment of internal power relations between Palestinians and Israelis and the subsequent unworkability of historical approaches to the Palestinian state, loss of faith in the Arab states to act on their behalf, acute psychic stress, and a desperate need for self-determination on a part of historical Palestine.[71]

Roy's analysis concludes that by renouncing the exclusivity of their claim to homes inside Israel, Palestinian refugees in Gaza have accepted the legitimacy of Israel, albeit as an enemy state. For Gazan refugees "the Palestinian–Israeli conflict is no longer viewed as a zero-sum game but as a negotiable dispute."[72]

It may be argued that events in Gaza since that research was undertaken, particularly the emergence of Hamas and the ongoing deterioration of economic and social conditions there, have altered the proportions of those who reject and accept the idea of accommodation with Israel. Roy was advised by local researchers that only approximately 2.3 per cent of the Gaza population supported Hamas. Current estimates of the potential electoral support for Hamas and other radical Islamic groups in Gaza since the Gaza–Jericho Agreement are closer to 30 per cent.[73] But the conclusions of Roy's research are not necessarily overtaken by evidence of rising support for Islamicist groups. Competition between those groups and the secular mainstream of Palestinian nationalism centres on their respective capacity to deliver tangible rewards to potential supporters, with outcomes reflecting, to some extent, the organisational skills of the contending parties. Support for Hamas does not always equate to rejection of the reality of Israel.

There is widespread Palestinian weariness with conflict and restricted opportunities for families. Middle class families, particularly the Christians, are uncomfortable with the inroads being made by Islamic extremism among the younger generation. Roy found that parents in Gaza particularly emphasised concern at their children's constant exposure to violence and the consequent erosion of parental control and discipline. Without a solution, they feared that the social damage would be

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authorities in the territories but also in the heartland of Israel itself...Although our intention was to quash terrorist activities, the very existence of a military government is enough to generate negative feelings...the situation invites animosity on both sides. A nation that forces itself on another nation, even for reasons of self defence, loses the will to abstain from oppression because of the dynamics of conquest...". Peres, Shimon *The New Middle East* Henry Holt and Co New York 1993 pp. 58–9.

[71] Roy *op. cit.* pp. 80–81.

[72] *Ibid.* p. 81.

[73] Comments by senior PLO official Nabil Sha'ath to a meeting with DFAT officials 20 September 1994. Another prominent Palestinian activist from Gaza, Raji Sourani, estimated the level of Hamas support there at no more than 18 per cent in a meeting with DFAT officials on 16 November 1994. Sourani emphasised, however, the growing dissatisfaction of Gazans with the results achieved by the PLO.

increasingly difficult to repair, and that it could lead to a total dissolution of the family and hence the societal unit.[74] A further factor pointing towards Palestinian acceptance of the reality of Israel is the collapse of popular hopes for confrontation with Israel following the Gulf War. Anecdotal evidence suggests the mixture of rage and resignation towards the Israeli occupation which followed Iraq's defeat was made all the more far-reaching by the visceral feelings and frustration which had been exploited by Saddam's posturing.[75]

The challenge in the Palestinian context is to look beyond immediate pressures of physical and psychological violence towards achieving progress on the hard core of underlying political issues. Palestinian statehood, sovereignty over Jerusalem, the future of Jewish settlements, and the right of Palestinian refugees to return or to be compensated are unlikely to be the subject of formal negotiations until at least the middle of 1996. Events in Gaza and the West Bank during the coming two years, including the effects of Palestinian empowerment on mutual perceptions, will have a major bearing on those negotiations. It will be necessary to maintain a delicate balance between optimising the timing of negotiations on particular issues, and maintaining contact with political realities.

Whether empowerment of Palestinians continues, as provided for under Gaza–Jericho arrangements, is uncertain. The negotiators of the Oslo and Cairo agreements covered a very wide range of issues for cooperation. There are around 80 committees and subcommittees now established between Israel and the PLO, examining areas of cooperation ranging from agriculture to weights and measures.[76] But neither Labor nor Likud-dominated Israeli governments are likely to go further towards empowerment unless the Palestinians' performance, particularly in the

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[74] Roy, *op. cit* p. 78. Roy quotes one Palestinian mother in the following terms:
"These children are the intifadah and they have been hurt deeply. The soldiers were not so cruel before the intifadah. But now, they behave like animals. They beat our children and kill them. Our children fear them and hate them. It is different with them than with us. If there is no solution, these children will one day throw more than stones because their hatred is great and they have nothing to hope for. If hope isn't given to them, they will take it from others. They will react with violence. We fear they will take the knives from our kitchens to use as weapons. They have no rules. They do not understand laws. They are going to be wild in the streets. If the world doesn't help us, we will be helpless to control our children." *ibid.* p. 78.

[75] The ambivalence of Palestinian reactions to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, and subsequent defeat, is reflected in comments made to Finkelstein by his contacts in Beit Sahur. Finkelstein records one such reaction as follows:
"One day Nidal mentioned to me that not everyone in Palestine cheered the Scud missile attacks. "There were a few exceptions," she said gently. "Myself, for example." "I did not go to the rooftop [to see the missiles passing overhead]" she recalled. "When I heard my family whistling, I got this sick feeling inside me. That we were all becoming monsters, beasts." This was not the first time I heard Nidal speak this way. Two years earlier, I had witnessed her reaction as she paused to reflect on her own irrepressible glee as the shebab were stoning a soldier. "Am I losing my humanity?," she had wondered aloud. But, Nidal said, when she learned that Saddam was withdrawing from Kuwait, her attitude suddenly changed. There was no longer any hope that Saddam would force Israel's hand. The occupation would continue. "I then slowly climbed the stairs to the roof," she said, "and glared at the blackness of the sky. It was as if I was possessed. I wanted to see millions of rockets headed for Tel Aviv. I wanted to see the whole world destroyed. Including us." "Where is justice?" she sighed." *op. cit.* p. 68.

[76] Statistics provided by Nabil Sha'ath during discussions with DFAT officials in Canberra on 20 September 1994.

security area, matches up to Israeli interpretations of Palestinian responsibilities under the Cairo Agreement. Further terrorist attacks within Israel will see rising pressure from the Israeli side to change security-related aspects of the agreement.[77]

In the meantime, although most Palestinians regard the Cairo agreement as being arrived at on a coercive basis, it is not considered so bad by the secular political mainstream within the Occupied Territories as to warrant their active opposition.[78] Discussions with Palestinian academics in mid-1994 revealed a substantial level of optimism that, so long as political movement continues, the original unsatisfactory basis for cooperation outlined in the Oslo Agreement will be gradually overlooked, and a more interests-based approach to cooperation will develop. In their view, the overall situation between Israelis and Palestinians was likely to be significantly better within five to ten years.[79] Only time will tell whether such optimism is well-placed.

The search for security between Israel and the Palestinian state, if it emerges, must begin with a concerted effort to develop a sense of mutuality and respect between Israelis and Palestinians. The legacy of conflict of the younger generation of Palestinians has to be addressed through education and through a process of "de-socialisation".[80] The insularity and negative perceptions of Israeli youth towards Palestinians and other Arabs have to be broken down.[81] These will be very difficult processes. They need to address imbalances of power between the two societies, as well as the differences of culture, religion, lifestyle and the political factors which have created senses of identity which are all too often based, in large measure, on mutual antipathy.

Without agreement on core political issues, including Palestinian statehood, and without economic security for ordinary Palestinians, Israel will remain an enemy state in Palestinian eyes. Some form of Israeli recognition of Palestinian rights in Jerusalem will be demanded on the Palestinian side, and resisted no less strongly on the part of the Israelis.[82] If resolving that issue remains beyond the limits of the possible, it will be necessary to keep ongoing debate over it within a framework of

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[77] Prime Minister Rabin indicated, following the terrorist attack in Netanya in January 1995 in which 21 Israelis were killed, that the Israeli government was considering the establishment of a security boundary between Israel and the Occupied Territories "not according to the basis of the pre-1967 borders". *Canberra Times* 25 January 1995.

[78] By January 1995, Palestinian polling suggested that support for the talks with Israel was running at 40 per cent; about half of all Palestinians wanted to suspend or halt the talks. *Al Hamishmar* 10 January 1995. p. 9.

[79] Confidential sources

[80] Roy *op. cit.* p. 78.

[81] A poll conducted by the Israeli newspaper Yediot Aharanot in early October 1994 among high school students in grades 9 and 10 found that 78 per cent said they opposed withdrawal from the Golan; 65 per cent of the students had "negative attitudes" towards Arabs, and 63 per cent thought that the continued existence of settlements was "more important than peaceful relations".

[82] Former Jordanian Prime Minister Zeid al Rifai told the author in May 1994 that Henry Kissinger had asked him to agree to put Jerusalem at the end of the agenda of the ill-fated Geneva peace conference arranged between the Soviet Union and the United States in December 1973. Rifai had immediately agreed. Kissinger, sensing he had made an error, asked Rifai why he had consented so quickly. Rifai replied that whether Jerusalem was the first agenda item or the last, there would be no peace until the issue was settled.

progress on other core political and economic issues. The security of both Israelis and Palestinians will hinge in important respects on ensuring that political differences, though important, no longer pose existential questions for either side. In the absence of such outcomes, random violence against Israelis will continue. Palestinians will be feared, mistrusted and kept so far as possible from normal interaction with Israeli society. The future of relations between Jews and Arabs within Israel cannot be easily separated from this issue.[83]

If a sense of security is to develop between Israel and the Palestinians, the Palestinian authority will need to build, in the medium term, the capacity to deal with Israel and other countries on a reasonably equitable and predictable basis. As part of the process of mutual recognition—possibly in advance of it—there has to be a reconstruction of civil society for Palestinians. This task has several dimensions. It involves overcoming the inadequacies of the physical infrastructure in the Palestinian entity, particularly in regard to housing, water, education facilities and health. Palestinians require assistance in the development of indigenous government, justice systems, and basic social services. Above all, Palestinians need immediate access to employment opportunities within Israel on a sufficiently large scale to provide the basis for a sound economic future. Labour flows to Israel, as well as to other parts of the Middle East and to Western countries, create funds which penetrate Palestinian society more effectively than government programs.

At a different level, there has to be a return to more normal patterns of social organisation within Palestinian families, including a reaffirmation of family authority. The ability of the older generation of Palestinians to retain normal developmental bonds with younger generations under conditions of outright conflict are likely to weaken and atrophy.[84] It remains to be seen to what extent the traditional bonds within Palestinian society have been diluted already by the nationalist struggle, and whether that process has been accompanied by declining

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[83] For discussion of the sensitivities surrounding this issue see Schnell, I., *Perceptions of Israeli Arabs: Territoriality and Identity* Avebury: Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, University of Warwick 1994. This study of Israeli Arabs and Jews in Galilee finds high levels of exclusiveness in the perceptions of "home territory" among the Arab and Jewish communities, particularly in regard to the latter. Adult Israeli Arabs in the Galilee perceive themselves as inhabitants of the Galilee, recognising and legitimising Jewish and Israel-Arab shared space in functional terms. Adult Jews, in contrast, display a stronger association with other Jewish settlement core areas outside the Galilee and a sense of isolation and insecurity when in the heart of an Israeli–Arab sub-region. The study provides other interesting—and disturbing—material regarding the relationship between Arab and Jew in contemporary Israel. This is particularly so in regard to its examination of adolescent Arab perceptions of Jewish and Israeli-Arab relations. Examining the drawings of Arab schoolchildren, the study finds tendencies among adolescent Israeli Arabs to identify with nationalistic Palestinian viewpoints and to give up their Israeli identity. In a similar vein, see Tsiddon, Yoash" The dream of Israeli Arabs" *The Jerusalem Post International Edition* week ending 26 November 1994 p. 6.
With a fast-growing Arab population already representing at least 17 per cent of the population, an evolution of the Israeli system into one more closely resembling the pluralism of neighbouring Arab states would seem inevitable if its overall stability is to be maintained. A breakdown of the peace process, however, could fuel Israeli fears of the Arab population and reinforce half-baked perceptions of Israeli Arabs as the enemy within, increasing discrimination against them while overlooking the root causes of the adversarial perceptions captured and analysed in Schnell's study.

[84] Roy *op. cit.* p. 78.

willingness among younger generations, in particular, to accept historical compromise.

Conclusion

The present phase of implementing and building on the Cairo Agreement between Israel and the Palestinians represents an interlude before core political issues have to be addressed. There is an ongoing risk that the process of Palestinian empowerment will be suspended, or that the dealings between the two sides will deteriorate beyond repair over the issues of settlements, Jerusalem and security before the final status negotiations begin.[85] The outcome of those negotiations, should they materialise, is likely to be mixed. A growth in economic stress, or signs of an alleviation of such stress, could have a far-reaching effect on the climate for negotiations by mid 1996. A loss of power by the Labor government in the Israeli elections to be held by mid-1996, or political instability among any of its Arab negotiating partners, could delay addressing the issues as well.

Palestinians are unlikely to be reconciled to the prospect of peace within an inherently unjust and unequal relationship with Israel.[86] They will also not accept the degradation inherent in Israeli rule.[87] They will have many supporters among the wider Arab world for that stance. For the Arab states bordering Israel, the unfolding of the Israel–Palestinian negotiations will be an important grassroots issue, and one which could constrain significantly the development of peace in the terms outlined at the beginning of this chapter. But on balance, Arab leaders and audiences who are not Palestinian may be willing to accept, as the price of peace, a very different set of priorities and requirements to those of the Palestinian leadership and people.[88] when definite national or regime interests are seen to be at stake, the outcomes of Israeli–Palestinian negotiations on core issues are unlikely to prevent Arab leaders from pursuing their national objectives regarding the West, and in so doing arriving at new relationships with Israel.

The asymmetry of power between Israel and its neighbours, and among the Arab countries themselves, is bound nonetheless to influence the nature of the

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[85] For a pessimistic assessment of the outlook in this respect, because of differences over settlement activity and security issues, see *The Guardian Weekly* week ending 15 January 1995 p. 1. See also a very sober analysis of the problems facing the negotiations by Danny Rubinstein in *Ha'aretz* 10 January 1995. Rubinstein argues that the PLO leadership's ability to win support for restraint by the Palestinian public arose from its promises that a sovereign state was in prospect, with Jerusalem as its capital, and that somehow the right of return issue would be resolved. Plans for settlement expansion in and around Jerusalem, he argues, have shattered that illusion, and with it, Arafat's capacity to maintain a Palestinian consensus or to retain majority support.

[86] Khalidi Ahmad S., *op. cit.* p. 5.

[87] David Shipler aptly refers to Proverbs 18:14 "The spirit of a man will sustain him in sickness; but who can bear a wounded spirit?"

[88] Benvenisti comments that "Arab regimes believe they have done for the Palestinians what they could and keep their involvement in the Palestinian cause only when it serves their interests. The Arab–Israeli conflict, which for forty years has been a regionwide, interstate conflict, has shrunk to its original core: the Israeli-Palestinian intercommunal strife". *op. cit.* p. 41.

agreements arrived at between the parties. Such imbalances may produce important impediments to reaching effective peace agreements in the Israel–Arab context. This study now turns to that issue.

IV NORMALISATION AND POWER

The pursuit of normal relations is viewed from somewhat different perspectives by Israel and its Arab neighbours. To most Arab audiences, the process of normalisation of relations with Israel should begin with the passing of key political threshold points, and proceed at a rate which matches political criteria.[1] The Israeli priority, in contrast, is to achieve normalisation, through peace agreements, as a means of securing multidimensional and sustainable relations with neighbouring countries. Only with normalisation, Israelis argue, can there be hope of resolving outstanding political differences amicably.

Imbalances of power in a broad sense—which includes levels of development and human resources as well as military capability—between the countries of the region may add to the sensitivities which surround the normalisation process. The differences between the countries of the region extend beyond culture and religion, to a concern to protect political and social values from the perceived risks of hegemony by stronger parties. There is also a concern among more powerful Arab countries to maintain the advantages of a position of strength towards less powerful neighbours, and a certain wariness concerning the possible implications of a growing regional role for Israel in that respect. The development of support for cooperation will need to overcome the challenges posed by these sensitivities.

Israeli approaches

From an Israeli perspective, the key purpose of peace agreements must be to allow relationships to develop which extend well beyond dealings between governments. For example, in addition to its purely military security aspects, an Israeli–Syrian agreement must represent what Ze'ev Schiff has described as "...a contractual peace, establishing an entire range of peaceful relations, such as the establishment of embassies, open borders, trade relations and tourism".[2] A similar approach has been adopted in Israel's approach to Jordan and Egypt, and it was reflected in the

[1] Withholding normalisation is seen by some Arabs as a form of leverage, and in more emotive terms by others. An Egyptian academic economist, Galal Amin, writes that "what should be considered as 'normal' regarding relations between Arabs and Israelis is not to have any relations at all until Israel gives up its occupation of Arab territories and its oppression of Palestinians". Amin, G.,"Normalisation on both sides" *Al Ahram Weekly* 17–23 November 1994.

[2] Schiff, Ze'ev *Peace with Security: Israel's Minimal Security Requirements in Negotiations with Syria* The Washington Institute for Near East Policy Washington D.C. 1993 p. xiv.

approach taken to Lebanon in 1982–83. Israel will not implement the withdrawal of its forces from southern Lebanon in compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 425 until it has a peace agreement with Lebanon which ensures adequate guarantees for the security of its northern border.[3]

The high priority accorded by Israel to normalisation of relations along these lines reflects perceptions of the strategies required for Israel's survival. The worst-case scenarios of Israeli strategic planners begin from an assessment that their state has to be capable of dealing, not only with the aspirations and grievances of dispossessed and displaced Palestinians, but also with hostile Arab forces which question both its legitimacy as a Jewish state and its claims to Jerusalem.[4] The former issue may be resolved at some stage. But since it is a fundamental position of the Israeli government that Jerusalem will remain the eternal capital of Israel, united and totally under Israeli sovereignty, the issue of Jerusalem is potentially unending.[5]

Israel also perceives its Arab neighbourhood as politically fragile. There seems to be a high degree of consensus among Israeli officials and analysts that the direction of regional developments is too unpredictable to permit much confidence in the value of peace agreements, except as a key means towards maximising contact between Israel and Arab countries in the widest possible range of bilateral activities, particularly at the popular level. Israeli officials have made clear their concerns on this score in private to their Arab counterparts.[6] Some Israelis are concerned about the possible outlook for Egypt in the medium term. Steinberg mentions, as an example of a worst case scenario for Israeli planners, that Egypt, perhaps under an Islamic regime, might participate in an Arab–Israel war and thereby again threaten Israel with an attack on two fronts.[7] There were reports in January 1995 that Prime Minister Rabin had warned of the need for Israel to be prepared for war in the mid- and long-term.[8]

Although priority has been given to bilateral negotiations in the Madrid context and elsewhere, regional cooperation has an important place in the overall mix of Israeli security strategies. Engagement in the multilateral working groups of the Madrid process has obvious relevance to the handling of water, environment, and other issues which do not fit easily into bilateral frameworks. The multilateral track also presents a means to discuss economic, social and cultural relations between the parties, with a long-term focus that extends beyond the agenda of the bilaterals.[9]

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[3] Nasrallah, Fida, *Prospects for Lebanon: The Questions of South Lebanon*, Centre for Lebanese Studies, Oxford, 1992 pp. 6–8.

[4] Kemp, *op. cit.* pp. 22–25.

[5] Government of Israel *Address to the Knesset by Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin presenting his Government and Basic Policy Guidelines of the 25th Government* Jerusalem 13 July 1992 p. 19.

[6] Confidential source.

[7] Steinberg, *op. cit.* p. 130.

[8] *Jerusalem Post International Edition* week ending 21 January 1995. p. 1.

[9] It has been recognised by all sides that progress in the multilateral working groups depends ultimately upon developments in the bilateral area. While potential mutually beneficial arrangements might emerge from multilateral talks, such discussions were not expected to drive the political processes in the bilateral arena.

From the Israeli perspective, the multilaterals' main benefit to date has been to provide a means of engaging the Arab hinterland in the normalisation of relations.[10] Although Syria has chosen not to participate, and Lebanon has been obliged to follow its lead, the multilaterals have almost certainly contributed to some tangible achievements in developing connections between Israel and the wider Arab world.

The Israeli approach to normalisation is both sophisticated and naive. On one hand, the focus on normalisation as a key part of security, backed by engagement in efforts to define the post-settlement outlook for the region through the multilateral tracks of the Madrid process, appears to have advantages of gradualism and trust-building. It does not deny the need to find solutions to political differences, but it seeks to keep political options open regarding possibly unresolvable core issues for as long as possible. The thinking underlying Israeli policy appears to be that if tangible benefits can be seen to accrue to both sides as a result of their cooperation, it is conceivable that a sense of mutuality may be developed over an extended period, without some or all of those political issues coming simultaneously to a head. Some issues may remain unresolved indefinitely, by tacit or explicit agreement of the parties concerned. Other differences may be more easily resolved because of the trust which has developed, or because greater mutual understanding has been established.

On the other hand, Israeli determination to press ahead with normalisation of relations ahead of the resolution of political differences raises serious problems. It has led, for example, to the abortive attempt to establish a peace treaty with Lebanon during the occupation of much of that country in 1983.[11] The Israeli preoccupation with arriving at formal agreements as the basis for normalisation has also tended to waste valuable opportunities in Lebanon for both sides.[12] In the Israeli–Palestinian context, there are significant political costs to the PLO associated with Israel's unwillingness to address core issues ahead of the timetable of the transition period provided for under the Declaration of Principles signed in Washington on 13 September 1993.[13]

Ideas and proposals generated in the multilaterals might of course be fed back into the bilaterals when relevant to the proceedings. Peters, *op. cit.* p. 34.

[10] Discussions with Ilan Baruch, Coordinator of Multilateral Peace Talks, Israeli MFA, May 1994.

[11] The Israeli effort was aborted by Syrian backed violence by opponents of the treaty. See, among others, Tueni, Ghassan "Lebanon: The Disparity between Ideal Commitments and Practical Implementation" in Kipper and Saunders, *op. cit.* p. 271. The treaty included provision for tourism as well as trade.

[12] For example, the Amal militia was the only significant local authority in the south of Lebanon after the Israelis withdrew to their security zone in 1984. There were no attacks on the Israelis for six months, because Amal thought the IDF would soon withdraw from Lebanon altogether. The IDF requested meetings with Amal through UNIFIL to sign a security agreement, but the militia could not do so because it needed, in the context of its rivalry with Hizbollah, to be able to claim that Israeli withdrawal was a victory for its resistance, not the result of collaboration. The end result was that the Israelis stayed on and Amal was weakened politically because its restraint was not rewarded by the Israelis (confidential source).

[13] The purpose of the delay of two years in the commencement of final status negotiations is not explained in the Declaration of Principles or the Cairo Agreement. It has been referred to informally by senior Israeli officials as a cooling off period, and an opportunity for the PLO to demonstrate its capacity to ensure Israeli security under the autonomy arrangements.

There is merit in the argument that a period of trust-building has to be a precursor to final status negotiations across all the outstanding issues in the Israeli–Palestinian context. Although internal pressure is building on the PLO and Israel to seek an earlier start to final status negotiations, it would be immensely counter-productive at present to address the core issues separating the two sides.[14] That reality is not easily reconciled, however, with Israel's pursuit in the meantime of diametrically opposed political goals, including the expansion of settlements and housing in East Jerusalem and surrounding areas, and efforts by the Israeli government to put an end to the symbolic Palestinian political presence at Orient House in East Jerusalem.[15] These are important political dilemmas for the PLO leadership. The PLO is being forced to weigh the potential for Israelis and Palestinians to come gradually to see each other in a less adversarial perspective, against the possibility that the chances of self-determination for the Palestinians will prove illusory.

Heavy-handed lobbying on Israel's behalf among Arab countries, urging them to accept normalisation according to the Israeli approach, also risks isolating Arab leaders from their audiences and from the political realities of the region. Senior Jordanian officials resented pressure applied on Jordan during the first half of 1994 to host the major Arab–Israeli business conference which eventually was held in Casablanca. They were concerned that accepting such a role, at a stage of the peace negotiations where key bilateral issues remained unresolved, would have strained severely the political climate for King Hussein in Jordan. It would also have left him unacceptably exposed to any subsequent reversals in the peace process.[16]

Arab perceptions

Robert Jervis has noted the tendency of states to underestimate the impact of their demands on the perceptions of others, assuming that others are aware of their benign intentions. He makes the point that Wilhemine Germany should have recognised that it was feared as a threat to the European equilibrium because of its size, population, geographic location, economic dynamism, "cocky militarism" and autocracy under a neurotic Kaiser. Even had Germany changed her behaviour, he concludes, "she would still have been the object of constant suspicion and apprehension by virtue of being the strongest power in Europe".[17]

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[14] The Likud Mayor of Jerusalem, Ehud Olmert, is among those who would like to see the question of Jerusalem addressed formally ahead of the mid-1996 start to the final status negotiations.

[15] See *Law Implementing the Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area (Restriction on Activity) 1994*, passed by the Knesset 26 December 1994. (Embassy of Israel, Canberra).

[16] Confidential source.

[17] Jervis, R. *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* Princeton University Press, Princeton N.J., 1976 pp. 70–71. Butterfield made a similar observation twenty five years earlier, which applies to both Arabs and Israelis:

"It is the peculiar characteristic of the...Hobbesian fear...that you yourself may vividly feel the terrible fear that you have of the other party, but you cannot enter into the other man's counter-fear, or even understand why he should be particularly nervous. For you know that you yourself mean him no harm, and that you

Jervis's observation has obvious relevance to the situation confronting Israel. The legacy of history presents significant and enduring obstacles to regional acceptance of that country. The victors of the Second World War did not remain in permanent control of the territory of their adversaries. The extent of economic complementarity between Israel and its Arab neighbours appears to be less than that enjoyed between the countries of Europe and the Asia–Pacific. But beyond those factors, and probably more important than them in the long term, is an even more fundamental obstacle. Because it is self-consciously a distinctive society[18], and one which is supported by an overwhelmingly higher level of national power than any of its neighbours, Israel is perceived among a significant part of Arab audiences as a threat.

Israeli superiority in terms of conventional arms and nuclear capability fuels such concerns at the street level. The fact that Israel has been able to maintain its military predominance on the basis of its technological and organisational superiority, as well as on the basis of its relationship with the United States, helps to remind Arab audiences of Israel's special position in United States Middle East policy.[19] The imbalance of power in Israel's favour adds to feelings of frustration, defiance and revulsion against Western domination.[20] According to Ayoob, the combination of Arab frustration with what he describes as "the Israeli obsession with absolute security"; and Arab perceptions of Israel as virtually an extension of Western power, makes it harder to find an acceptable solution to the conflict and to integrate Israel fully into the region.[21] There is a disposition, particularly among a significant proportion of the popular audiences of its Arab neighbours, to see Israel as a country with a drive for power produced by an instinctive will to dominate others. There is a genuine, deep-seated fear among many Arab intellectuals and among wider Arab audiences that Israel is intent upon achieving its security through regional economic and political hegemony.[22]

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want nothing from him save guarantees for your own safety...Neither party can see the nature of the predicament he is in, for each only imagines that the other party is being hostile and unreasonable." Butterfield, H., *History and Human Relations* Collins, London, 1951 pp. 19–20.

[18] In accepting his share of the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize, Foreign Minister Peres summed up the vision for Israel of David Ben Gurion as "...to be a singular people, to live at peace with our neighbours". *Remarks by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Oslo December 10 1994*. Embassy of Israel, Canberra.

[19] Morris, Mary E., *The Persistence of External Interest in the Middle East* RAND, Santa Monica 1993 p. 61.

[20] Ayoob, Mohammed "Unravelling the Concept: 'National Security' in the Third World" in Khorany, B., Noble, P. and Brynen, R. (eds.) *The Many Faces of National Security in the Arab World* The MacMillan Press, Basingstoke, 1993 pp. 45–6.

[21] *Ibid.* p. 46.

[22] For a comprehensive examination of the notion of a Greater Israel among Arab countries, see Pipes, Daniel "Imperial Israel: The Nile to Euphrates Calumny" in *Middle East Quarterly* Vol. 1, No. 1, March 1994, pp. 29–39. The comments about Israeli territorial, economic and political ambitions reportedly made by Syrian Vice President Khaddam, as discussed in the footnote 28 below, are also relevant. While perhaps an extreme example, the Hamas covenant issued on 18 August 1988 notes at Article 32 that "Zionism (sic) scheming has no end, and after Palestine, they will covet expansion from the Nile to the Euphrates River. When they have finished digesting the area on which they have laid their hand, they will look forward to more expansion. Their scheme has been laid out in the 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion' " (Embassy of Israel, Canberra 24 October 1994). See also Kemp, *op. cit.* pp. 22–5.

The potential for tensions to arise between Arabs and Israelis arising from Israeli "penetration" has been noted by more perceptive Israelis for some time. Shlomo Avineri summed up the problem as follows:

> It should be remembered that our presence in the area as a sovereign state is political, social and religious trauma for the Arab world. It must be educated to accept Israel and we can only hope that in time the trauma will be overcome. It is clear that in political negotiations Israel cannot allow herself to give up all its bargaining cards without full return in everything concerning legitimacy and normalisation. But even after the attainment of such an agreement in one form or another, suspicion and enmity will not disappear. The demonology of an all-powerful Israel will continue to frighten at least some parts of the Arab world, and will certainly serve as a weapon in the hands of Arabs dissatisfied with the process of partial or full reconciliation with Israel. We must be careful not to play into the hands of anyone with such fears, be he innocent or malevolent. An inconspicuous presence, as low a profile as possible, a curb on the uncontrolled Israeli initiative-all these will only help in enabling the Arab world to adjust to the existence of Israel as a sovereign Jewish state in the region, and in integrating Israel internally as a nation and as a society.[23]

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, and some Israeli media commentators, have acknowledged that concern exists about the possibility of economic domination by Israel.[24] There is a risk, however, that the energetic pursuit of the normalisation process, and the effort made to promote the visions which underly that approach, may significantly under-estimate the depth of Arab anxieties on this score. An illustration of this concern was the generally negative Arab press commentary in the Gulf states on the Middle East/North Africa Economic Conference in Casablanca in late October 1994. UAE papers expressed fear that Israel would

> ...take advantage of the conference to get a foothold in the region, and there is a disequilibrium between Israel and the Arabs, enabling Israel possibly to gain more than anyone else from the conference, which may harm Arab unity.[25]

The problem is also reflected in the comments of an Egyptian economist, who writes

> ...What Israel is after is not a Middle East Market but an economic empire of Greater Israel. To go along with Israeli demands, attend their conferences and study their economic proposals in the hope that this will strengthen the so-called 'peace process', is at best an illusion.[26]

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[23] Avineri, Shlomo "Political Relations" in Alouph Hareven (ed.) *If Peace Comes: Risks and Prospects* The Van Leer Jerusalem Foundation, Jerusalem, 1978 p. 45.

[24] Peres, S. *The Valley of Peace* State of Israel Jerusalem April 1994 p. 6. See also a thoughtful analysis of the problems of normalisation between differing cultures by Guy Bechor "A Daily Bus Line and Two Distant Stops" *Ha'aretz* 17 January 1995.

[25] *Arab Media Survey* (Embassy of Israel, Canberra) 1 November 1994.

[26] Amin, G., "Normalisation on both sides" *Al Ahram Weekly* 17–23 November 1994.

The contrast between such statements and the visionary imagery of peace being advanced on the Israeli side could hardly be more striking.[27]

Neither Arab nor Israeli leaders have made much effort to address the suspicions and apprehension of their audiences regarding their traditional adversaries. Neither leaderships have sought in a sustained fashion to explain or to interpret objectively to their audiences the positions of the other parties with whom they are seeking peace. In the case of Syria, the leadership has maintained a high level of negative rhetoric concerning Israeli regional ambitions.[28] Some Israelis believe that prominent Israeli figures have reinforced their own political positions, and the role of the military and security services, by deliberately inflating security concerns.[29] In some cases, such as in regard to dealing with Lebanon, leaders on both sides may not fully understand the complexities of the other's position.

Even if leaders were in a position to explain the full picture, they would still have to contend politically with forces opposed to compromise in the Arab world, and in Israel, which have opposed the peace process.[30] There will be resistance to change from elements that have benefited from the situation which has prevailed in recent decades, and for whom the prospect of peace poses great uncertainty. Those forces will be well-prepared to exaggerate, and to exploit, fears of domination (in the case of the Arabs) and the prospect of political, economic and territorial concessions.

Egypt

The problems which have remained unresolved in the Israeli–Egyptian relationship have already been discussed. But there was a clear rise in Israeli sensitivities about that relationship towards the end of 1994, and particularly in the aftermath of a summit meeting between Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia in Alexandria in January 1995. The Alexandria meeting was widely interpreted in Israel as a sympathetic response on Egypt's part to Syrian concerns about Arab countries acting independently in forging ties with Israel. It also led to expressions of regret by the Israeli government that Egypt "had not taken a neutral position" on the terms of peace between Israel and Syria.[31] Early January also saw difficult discussions

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[27] For an example of the tone and scope of Israeli comments on this subject, see Beilin, Y., *A Vision of the Middle East* (Speech made by the Head of the Israeli Delegation to the Steering Committee of the Multilateral Peace Talks in Tokyo 15 December 1993). See also Peres, S. *op. cit., passim.*

[28] On the eve of talks in Washington in November 1994, Syrian Vice President Abd al-Halim Khaddam reportedly asserted that the "Zionist danger...has not changed its objectives, which seek to take control over the region and its resources. Likewise, Israeli strategy seeks to go beyond geographic conquest and to conquer the Arab will...to erase Arab identity, break the connection between Arabs and eliminate the all-Arab institutions". *Davar* 30 December 1994.

[29] Confidential Israeli source.

[30] Thomas Friedman has captured the essence of the arguments against compromise advanced at times by both Arabs and Israelis: "When I am weak, how can I compromise? When I am strong, why should I compromise?" Friedman *op. cit.* p. 194.

[31] *Jerusalem Post International Edition* Week ending 7 January 1995. p.2. The report quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin.

between Peres and Mubarak about their respective perceptions of Israel's role in the Middle East, particularly in the economic area.[32]

Interpretations of the Egyptian position vary. Some Israeli analysts see Egypt attempting to reunite the Arab world under its leadership, while "flying the flag of containing Israel".[33] Peres reportedly has taken a more sympathetic view of Egypt's need to maintain simultaneously its relations with the United States and Israel, and its standing in the Arab and Moslem worlds.[34]Another analyst claims there is an accepted view in Jerusalem that Egyptian behaviour "...is part of the struggle that Mubarak is conducting with Israel for regional hegemony", in which the Egyptians accuse Israel of ignoring their historical role in the Middle East and of pushing them to the margins of the peace process. According to this analysis, Israel's agreements with the PLO and Jordan have accelerated the building of an Egyptian–Syrian–Saudi axis as a counter-weight.[35]

While the extent of Egypt's interests in maintaining a high and constructive profile in the peace process almost certainly rule out suggestions that it is seeking to hinder that process on Syria's behalf, Egypt cannot afford to be seen as marginal to that process in the Arab world either. The evidence of limited support within Egypt for normalisation, and a degree of chagrin at the limited scope for Egypt to play a part in the Israeli–PLO and Israeli–Jordanian agreements, have almost certainly encouraged the Egyptian leadership to review its position with such a consideration in mind. Within careful limits, bearing in mind the need to work with a Republican-dominated US Congress, Egypt probably sees advantages in underlining to Israel and the United States that Egyptian objectives are closely attuned to the maintenance of its high profile in both its Western and Arab environments. Support for positions damaging to Egyptian interests in either regard cannot be taken for granted.[36]

If this analysis is correct, the odds favour, if not the restoration in due course of more satisfactory relations between Israel and Egypt, at least a halt to their deterioration before wider Egyptian interests are adversely affected. But it also seems fairly clear that if Egypt is to be part of any cooperative approach to security, a great deal more preparation will be required to establish the principles upon which such cooperation will be based. Among those principles, Egypt may expect

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[32] Peres reportedly told Mubarak that "if you want an Arab economy, Israel will step out of the picture, but what is an Arab economy? Economic starvation. We do not need the Middle East from an economic standpoint, but we do embody your chance for progress." *Ha'aretz* 5 January 1995 p. B1.

[33] Moshe Zak, in *Ha'aretz* 5 January 1995 p. B1.

[34] *Ha'aretz* 5 January 1995 p. B1

[35] Commentary by Aluf Ben, *Ha'aretz* 5 January 1995 p. B1.

[36] Levite and Landau suggest that some Egyptian officials fear that Egypt will fare worst from a complete normalisation of relations within the region which gives Israel a free hand to capitalize on its technological proficiency, economic prowess and its affinity to the West, "...while relegating Egypt from its natural position of leadership in the Arab world to the status of a second class Middle East power. Such fears are magnified by the perception of increasing collaboration between Israel and another non-Arab Middle East power with similar aspirations, Turkey." Levite, A., and Landau, E., "Israel's Qualitative Security Edge in Arab Eyes" in Shlomo Gazit (ed.) (1994) *op. cit.* p. 180.

to be assured of a continuing pre-eminence in consultative processes, since so many of Egypt's vital interests, including its relationship with the West, hinge upon the perceived centrality of Egypt's place in the politics and security of the region.[37] In return, Israelis will be likely to expect a much more visible, sustained and effective effort on the part of Egypt to make normalisation a reality. That may include putting an end to what one Israeli writer has described as political and psychological belligerency from the Egyptian side.[38]

Syria

The prospects of involving Syria, and by extension Lebanon, in a cooperative security arrangement perceived by President Asad as a *Pax Hebraica* are poor. Khalidi and Agha have noted that from the Syrian perspective, the struggle with Israel is "no mere political or territorial dispute but rather a clash of destinies"[39]. President Asad has summed up the Syrian position on normalisation in the following terms:

> We want just peace because we want stability for the region. However we want a peace that restores to us our territory and rights...Inequitable agreements and deals which do not guarantee rights cannot constitute an element for security and stability in the region.
>
> Giving the peace process more meaning than it actually implies and imposing on it extraneous elements that do not belong to it—and here I am addressing others—does not help the peace process. Rather, this endangers it. We should not involve the peace process in issues that are outside its own framework...
>
> Syria is aware that peace has objective requirements. These requirements are not alien to peace. Syria shall meet the objective requirements of peace that are agreed upon.[40]

The clear implication of Asad's speech is that the "objective requirements" of peace apply to the formalities of concluding peace treaties and the modalities of protecting the interests of both sides. Beyond that, the idea of normalisation appears to rest, in President Asad's mind at least, in the realm of the extraneous. The issues the Syrian regime is prepared to address at this stage, in seeking the return of the Golan and a stable relationship with Israel regarding Lebanon, do not extend into wider questions about what peace with Israel would mean for the Syrian economy and its political system.

President Asad is cautious, and suspicious of Western and Israeli objectives. Although there is a widely-held view that he has made a strategic decision for peace with Israel, he is unwilling, as one analyst puts it,

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[37] This is the broad contention which underlies the analysis by Ralph King, *op. cit.*

[38] Zak, M., *Ha'aretz* 5 January 1995 p. B1.

[39] Khalidi, Ahmad S and Agha, Husein "The Syrian Doctrine of Strategic Parity" in Kipper and Saunders *op. cit.* p. 186.

[40] President Hafiz al Asad, *Address to the Syrian People's Assembly, 10 September 1994, FBIS* 11 September 1994.

> ...to elaborate more fully the exact nature of the peace he is willing to make before Israel explains how much of a price, in the currency of withdrawal, it will be ready to pay.[41]

The regime is exercising strict control over all commentary on Syrian participation in the peace process.[42] Asad is also conscious of the potential sensitivity his domestic power base may display to quick agreement on the terms of peace with Israel. Normalisation of relations may hold great uncertainties for the military establishment on which the Syrian regime is based.[43]

Even in the event of a breakthrough in the areas of principle under negotiation with Israel, Asad is likely to move very slowly towards agreement on detailed matters such as the timing of Israeli withdrawal, peace-keeping arrangements, demilitarised zones and financial assistance for Syria. If there are tangible rewards to be attained from peace, they are ill-defined at this stage. Asad is reluctant to allow much discussion of the issue within the regime.[44]

The degree of access powerful figures within the Syrian elite would have to those opportunities is also undefined, although it is assumed among Syrian businessmen that the existing elite would be primary beneficiaries.[45] Political activity within the Syrian regime, including manoeuvring among individuals and factions and the preservation of vested interests is likely to remain at the forefront of leadership concerns. Syrian business sources believe that generational change is unlikely to make a significant difference to the Syrian approach. In their view, the offspring of the Syrian ruling elite appear to be as keen as their parents to take opportunities to exploit their privileged position to capitalise on emerging economic opportunities, including in Lebanon.

The degree of complementarity between the two economies is not known. Syrian officials deny that it is being examined at this stage on the Syrian side.[46] Those officials also insist that peace is being pursued for its own sake, and that it would be a mistake to encourage unrealistic expectations regarding its economic returns.

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[41] Muslih, Muhammad "Dateline Damascus: Asad is Ready" *Foreign Policy* Number 96, Fall 1993 p.155.

[42] Dr Muhammad Aziz Shukri, Dean of the Law School of the University of Damascus was sacked and banned from all contact with foreigners for six months in mid 1994 following his publicised attendance at a seminar which also involved Israeli scholars.

[43] In what may have been an illustration of such sensitivity, the head of the Syrian Special Forces, Ali Haidar was forced to retire in August 1994 and subsequently was incarcerated briefly, reportedly for criticising the direction of Syrian policy on the peace process, and for claiming that Asad was turning his family into a ruling dynasty through enhancement of the status of his son Bashar. Three other prominent figures within the military and security apparatus were retired at the same time. The affair fueled speculation at the time that Asad may be preparing for a restructuring of the armed forces as part of a peace agreement with Israel and as a means of keeping power in his family in the post-peace era. Whether the moves were merely factional manoeuveres or were related to prepositioning for eventual dealing with Israel is an open question. Asad may simply have been aiming to pre-empt dissent within the regime, particularly among those like Haidar who are from a different Alawite clan. Andoni, Lamis "Asad Nudges Syria Closer to Peace Deal With Israel" *Christian Science Monitor* 30 August 1994.

[44] Confidential source.

[45] Confidential source.

[46] Confidential sources.

Officials acknowledge that after peace is achieved, the possibility of economic cooperation with Israel in specific fields may be discussed, "if the Israelis wish". At the same time, however, the officials note that Syrian business proceeds on the basis of trust with counterparts elsewhere, and that government to government frameworks are not always necessary.[47]

Syrian analysts also stress the depth of popular bitterness towards Israel. According to one prominent Syrian analyst, the strength of popular sentiment is such that the most promising approach to the development of normal relations with Israel "after the return of the Golan" would be "a cessation of name-calling for a year," following which a Syrian academic "might attend" a seminar program in Cairo. The same source warns that "anti-Semitic" feeling is strong among Syrian intellectuals in the Arab Writers Union and among academics (including visiting Jordanian academics) and shows signs of worsening.[48]

There has been some contrary evidence to these assertions. This includes the appearance on the road from the airport and in parts of Damascus of posters and graffiti mentioning peace, presumed to have been approved by the regime for the benefit of visiting US officials; and the unjamming of Jordanian television to show the signing on 25 July 1994 of the Jordan–Israel Washington Declaration. The fact that Asad has mentioned the existence of "objective requirements" of peace with Israel is seen by some as an indication that the regime is sending signals to its component parts, and to the public, to prepare for changes. In November 1994, the respective Chiefs of Staff of Israel and Syria met in Washington; and each met with the chief political negotiator of the other side. The fact that Asad allowed such meetings to take place is further evidence that the Syrians are committed to the negotiating process. But these developments are very minor indications at best of movement in the Syrian approach, at this stage, on the substantive issues surrounding normalisation.

President Asad has confined his public remarks about peace with Israel to generalities. He has referred to a "peace of the brave" with Israel, in a speech to the Golani Druse in September 1992, and the Syrian Foreign Minister spoke afterwards of "total peace for total withdrawal".[49] Asad referred again to a "peace of the brave" after his meeting with President Clinton in Geneva on 16 January 1994. He spoke of a "real, comprehensive and just peace throughout the region" following a subsequent meeting with Clinton on 27 October 1994. Asad has left it to Clinton, however, to give public interpretations of what he has said in private.[50] There has been little evidence of reciprocation from Damascus of what seems to have been a

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[47] Confidential source.

[48] Confidential source.

[49] Quandt, William B., *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab–Israeli Conflict since 1967* The Brookings Institution, Washington 1993 p. 409.

[50] Acccording to Gazit, Rabin rejected American interpretations of the meeting between Asad and Clinton, pointing out that Asad had not supported "Clinton's idyllic description of future Israeli–Syrian normalisation" but had maintained his traditional public position without explicitly promising future normalisation. Gazit, S., "The Peace Process in 1993–94" in Shlomo Gazit (ed.) *op. cit.* p. 31.

slight tendency towards the de-demonisation of President Asad on the Israeli side during 1994.[51]

For all the reasons above, Israeli demands for normal relations ranging across all areas of contact between governments and populations are simply not able to be addressed in Damascus at this stage. They are premature issues before Syria's goals are achieved. They appear to present real problems to a political system and an economy which have developed on a closed basis.[52] The Israeli approach flies in the face of Syrian concerns at both leadership and popular levels to resist the perceived risks of a normalised relationship.[53] President Asad is not going to become a committed multilateralist overnight. If he were to change in that direction, moreover, it is not clear that he would be likely to seek cooperation with Israel ahead of other, generally less threatening potential partners such as Turkey, European countries and the United States.

Some Arab analysts, business people and officials question whether a regime with such a weak record in terms of economic performance and promotion of human rights could make a worthwhile contribution at a regional level to cooperation on those issues.[54] The effective development of policy in such areas, these observers contend, may be beyond reach so long as the root causes of Syria's managerial and administrative problems remain unaddressed. They question whether Syria could deal with those issues where they cut across existing domestic interests, and point to the absence of evidence that change to the fundamental structure of the regime is being contemplated.[55]

Lebanon

The stakes involved in Lebanon for both Israel and Syria mean that Lebanon will have to accept security arrangements worked out between its powerful neighbours. The extent of Syria's ambitions in Lebanon are difficult to discern and easily exaggerated. Syria has interests in seeing a strengthening of the Lebanese government *vis à vis* the confessional groups of Lebanese society, because the

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[51] Israeli defence analyst Ze'ev Schiff commented in a review of the security conditions necessary for peace with Syria that "Syria has been a difficult enemy but we must not forget that there have already been agreements and settlements with the Syrians—and the latter have complied with them in all respects. We were not always just, and the Syrians were not always wicked..." Schiff, Ze'ev "The Necessary Conditions for Peace with Syria" *Ha'aretz* 21 January 1994 p. B5. Israeli MFA officials echoed these sentiments in private.

[52] It will not have escaped the attention of the Syrians that the Peace Treaty between Israel and Jordan, discussed below, contains provision for the negotiation within less than nine months of more than 30 agreements, covering almost every conceivable range of activity between governments.

[53] Khaddam has attacked the concept of a "New Middle East" advocated by Peres, describing it as "a means to press for the penetration of Israeli strategy into the Arab world. The objective of such plans is to integrate Israel into the regional structure, and as a result change this structure, in order to establish a new structure in which the Israeli element would be the strongest one. Calls in this direction, and the international efforts being brought to bear to achieve this goal, constitute a serious danger to the Arabs' interests and their future." *Davar* 30 December 1994.

[54] Confidential sources.

[55] Confidential sources.

exploitation of confessionalism by third parties poses risks to Syria's own stability and its influence over Lebanese affairs. The Syrian leadership has significant interests in avoiding a situation in which it is required to preserve Syrian interests and influence in Lebanon through active military involvement.

Syria's preferred approach over the past decade has been to construct a Lebanese government sympathetic to Syrian interests, and to use its leverage upon all parties where necessary. It has been prepared to back this leverage with armed force when challenged, as in its defeat of the forces loyal to General Aoun in October 1990. Usually, however, Syria has avoided the foreclosing of political options with any Lebanese group or groups in its exploitation of the ceaseless manoeuvrings among Lebanese political factions.

The odds are strongly against any significant change in the relationship between Syria and Lebanon. Syrian domination is widely resented. The exploitation of economic opportunities in Lebanon by the Syrian regime affronts Lebanese politicians and business leaders, but there is no doubt in Lebanese minds about where power lies.[56]

Syria will be wary of proposals for Lebanese–Israeli ties which could be capable of weakening Syrian capacity to control Lebanese developments relevant to Syrian security and economic interests. Lebanese ministers assert that the present trend is toward ever-increasing Syrian control over economic decision-making, extending into such areas as the pricing of agricultural products (including the dumping of Syrian products) and displacement of Lebanese labour by Syrians.[57] Syria may see its future dealings with Lebanon in terms similar to those applying between China and Hong Kong, in the sense that the rate of economic liberalisation allowed in Lebanon may be greater than that which occurs in Syria. Political control from Damascus, however, is likely to be maintained fairly strictly (albeit within limits imposed by the fragmented nature of Lebanese society).

For the moment, Syrian control extends very firmly over the approach of Lebanon to the negotiations under the Madrid framework. This control includes a prohibition on Lebanese participation in the multilateral discussions. Lebanese academics believe Damascus has instructed the Hariri government to forbid them from engaging in any form of activity which could suggest a weakening of Syria's approach to the multilaterals prior to the attainment of Syria's bilateral objectives with Israel. A ban was imposed in 1994 on Lebanese academics attending seminars with Israelis, following a furore in the Lebanese Parliament surrounding the participation in such a seminar of Boutros Labaki, Vice-President of the Council for Development and Reconstruction. [58]

There seems little likelihood that the Israeli government would see scope to reshape the nature of the Syrian-Lebanese relationship. Some key Israeli officials in terms

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[56] Confidential sources.

[57] Confidential source.

[58] Confidential source.

of policy towards Lebanon continue to believe the basis of the abortive 1983 treaty remains valid. They also believe that the Lebanese should be given the right to pursue it. Those officials do not suggest, however, that giving effect to that view is a priority concern for Israel.[59] Israeli officials with responsibilities in regard to Lebanon and Syria have privately confirmed that Israel accepts that Syria has defence interests in the Beqaa valley. Israel is not pressing Syria to make a full withdrawal of its forces.[60] Officials generally are highly sceptical of the value and effectiveness of re-engaging in Lebanese political affairs.

The imbalance of power between Israel and Lebanon is not a major impediment to achievement of an Israeli withdrawal. Such a move on Israel's part depends essentially upon agreement between Syria and Israel on arrangements concerning their respective security interests. The imbalance is a problem, however, so far as it encourages ill-considered Israeli military actions against targets in the South which undermine efforts to enhance the authority of the Lebanese government, including in regard to Hizbollah. If Israel wished to end its presence in Lebanon and to develop soundly-based relations with that country, it would need to provide favourable conditions for the Lebanese Army to assume full responsibility for security in the border area, with Syrian support where necessary.

It is also possible, however, that Israel does not intend to restrict its capacity to pursue its security interests in Lebanon, particularly in the South, whatever the outcomes of the peace process. The Syrians, whose thinking is almost certainly along those lines, would in practice have little difficulty with such an approach. Their main concerns would be to ensure that the unwritten rules of such involvement were clear to both sides, along the lines of the 1976 "Red Line agreement", and that both sides acknowledged the legitimate security interests of the other.[61] For its part, Syria would be in no hurry to define its relationship with Hezbollah as part of a settlement of the Lebanese question. The removal of Hezbollah units from the South, which appears to be an ongoing Israeli demand in its negotiations with Syria, or the suppression of Hezbollah as a military force, will only occur within the framework of an agreement that includes an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights and Syria's removal from the American list of states supporting terrorism.[62]

Jordan

With the signing of their peace treaty in October 1994, Israel and Jordan may be expected to rely for the foreseeable future on a mixture of deterrence-based and cooperative strategies. The imbalance of power between the two countries is a less

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[59] Confidential Israeli source.

[60] Confidential Israeli sources.

[61] For an illuminating discussion of the relationship between Syria and Israel in Lebanon from an Israeli perspective, see Rabinovich, Itmar "Controlled Conflict in the Middle East: The Syrian—Israeli Rivalry in Lebanon" in Ben-Dor, G. and Dewitt, D. (eds.) *Conflict Management in the Middle East* Lexington Books, Lexington Mass. 1987 pp. 97–110.

[62] See commentary by Akiva Eldar, *Ha'aretz* 3 January 1995.

serious problem for Jordanian leaders than for their Syrian counterparts, and the issues it raises are somewhat different.

Israeli and Jordanian interests are more closely aligned than in other Israeli dealings with Arab states, and deterrence is less relevant to the thinking of either party at the leadership level. A watchful eye is maintained on the political ambitions and posturing of individuals on each side of the Jordan River.[63] But Israel is not seen at the leadership level in Jordan as posing a serious threat to continued rule of the Hashemite family, despite the bluster of a few Israeli politicians who see Jordan without the Hashemites as a convenient means of transferring the Palestinian problem elsewhere.[64] Like most Israeli analysts, the Jordanian leadership recognises that it is more in Israel's interests to maintain a stable relationship with Jordan, than to attempt to resolve the Palestinian issue at Jordan's expense. In addition, at a minimum, Israel would see its interests served by denying Jordanian territory to any potential adversary.[65]

Of course there are significant political difficulties involved in moving the relationship between Jordan and Israel forward quickly. The most obvious consideration is the possible reaction of the large proportion of the Jordanian population which is of Palestinian origin.[66] Developments adversely affecting Palestinians in the Occupied Territories reverberate among Palestinians in Jordan, with whom family links and emotional bonds remain strong. Among the Palestinian community, there would be strong objections to any Jordanian moves towards Israel which were perceived as damaging to the Palestinian negotiating position. Apart from the political difficulties involved in moving the relationship between Israel and Jordan forward, however, Jordan faces the challenge of balancing the pressures for normalisation of relations, and the economic benefits of doing so, against the potential impact of that process on an economy and society which is much less capable of absorbing changes than its larger Israeli counterpart. [67]

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[63] See comments ascribed to Ariel Sharon in the *Jerusalem Post* of 27 June 1982 that the Palestinians should be encouraged to overthrow the Hashemite Kingdom and convert Jordan into their own national state; and in *Le Matin* of 2 July 1982 that "as Prime Minister he would give King Hussein 24 hours to leave Amman" (cited in Jansen, M., *The Battle of Beirut* Zed Press, London, 1982 p. 122.)

[64] Advocates of the transfer of Palestinians comprise extremist political figures as Rehavam Ze'evi of Moledet, but not the mainstream of the Likud.

[65] This assessment is reflected in Article 4 b. of the peace treaty signed between Israel and Jordan on 26 October 1994, in which both countries undertook not to allow the "entry, stationing, and operating on their territory, or through it, of military forces, personnel or materiel of a third party, in circumstances which may adversely prejudice the security of the other Party."

[66] Estimates vary widely of the proportion of the Jordanian population which is of Palestinian origin or background. The proportion may be anywhere between 40 per cent to 60 per cent. It is not a homogeneous community in a political sense, partly because of disparities of income, and partly because of the differing extent to which those who came to Jordan in 1948 and 1967 have come to see their long term future in terms of Jordan rather than Palestine. Even with these qualifications, however, the fact that Palestinians are overwhelmingly concentrated in certain suburbs of Amman and other urban centres means they are capable of achieving political impact out of proportion to their actual numbers.

[67] Although Jordan's population is three quarters the size of Israel's, Jordan's 1992 GNP was US$ 4.5 Billion or 7 per cent of that of Israel. Jordan's per capita GDP was US$ 1300 or about one tenth of that of Israel. Jordan's imports were only 17.5 per cent of Israel's total imports in that year. "Jordan Fears Economic Competition" *Ha'aretz* 20 July 1994.

Economic issues

The Jordanian economy is small. It suffers from high costs of transport of exports and imports. Its manufacturing sector has developed with a high degree of protection. Prior to the Gulf War, as much as 80 per cent of its manufactured exports were destined for the Iraqi market. Israeli studies indicate that Jordan's principal exports—phosphate, fertilisers and potash—have no demand in Israel. Appreciation of the capacity of Jordanian manufactures to penetrate Israeli markets—and the levels of risk Jordanian manufacturers face from Israeli imports—is also constrained by limited knowledge of the Israeli market. There is a large number of Israeli products which could be exported to Jordan, including processed food, paper and cartons, shoes, electronics, chemicals, textile yarn, and industrial machinery. [68]

Both countries may benefit from the development of transit trade between Israel and other Arab countries though Jordan, and the transit of Jordanian imports and exports to Europe and North America by-passing the Suez Canal. The development of Jordan's nascent tourism industry is expected to be enhanced significantly by the peace agreement. There is also potential for cooperative ventures in the manufacture and marketing of agricultural equipment to other Middle East countries; the export of fresh vegetables, semi-processed and final product foods to Europe and the Middle East; and the development of hybrid seeds and joint agricultural research.

If Jordan is to realise the full economic benefits of cooperation with Israel, however, the Jordanian government will have to push ahead with the opening up of the economy. This will impact upon areas which it has previously protected or allowed to develop without strong domestic competition. To develop an expanded transit trade, for example, the Jordanian government will need to introduce a much greater degree of competition into the Jordanian road transport system, which is a highly protected part of the service economy and one which has operated essentially as an oligopoly. The deregulation of the Jordanian economy is taking place already in response to the urging of the International Monetary Fund, and in preparation for acceptance of obligations in regard to the GATT. It is uncertain, however whether the government may be prepared to play a more direct redistributive role.

The limits of what is politically realistic are also unclear. Jordanian political culture has traditionally demanded a high level of government intervention in order to protect consumers. Security of employment within government and within the business sector is highly valued. Strictly free-market approaches are not characteristic of Jordanian approaches to business. The palace has encouraged tolerance and compromise in domestic politics. It has been concerned to preserve a liberal-minded and consensual political framework for the kingdom, and not to allow others to exploit positions of political strength to the detriment of that

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[68] *Ha'aretz* 20 July 1994

framework. It may face a difficult task in distributing the economic impact or benefits of normalised relations with Israel.[69]

Jordan has a huge negotiating burden ahead. It is hampered by a lack of information and detailed studies of the optimum paths to follow in opening up its economy.[70] Until it is able to determine its objectives and negotiating strategies with confidence, Jordanian negotiators will face considerable difficulty meeting such an ambitious timetable. Senior business figures are also conscious that with such a small economy and politically volatile society, the Kingdom cannot afford to proceed on a basis of trial and error. [71]

Israel appears to be in a stronger position than Jordan to benefit from cooperation in the services area. It has a significantly greater reservoir of expertise on which to draw for analysis of the impact of specific proposals on Israeli interests.[72] In regard to proposals for joint development of tourism, for example, the questions of whether to cooperate or to compete in various areas involve detailed consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of each strategy. If a decision to cooperate seems warranted, it would be necessary to analyse the desirable division of benefit and risks between the two countries. Jordan has limited access to technical advice on such issues.

Cultural property

The need for Jordan to protect itself while developing cooperation extends into the protection of cultural property. Jordanian resources for archaeological research are limited. In contrast, on the Israeli side, there is substantial funding and considerable interest in gaining access to Jordanian sites and material for research purposes.

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[69] If economic adjustment caused unemployment in the manufacturing sector, the political ramifications would be particularly sensitive, because it would affect a predominantly Palestinian, urban population in which Islamicist forces are already well-entrenched. On the other hand, if economic cooperation develops quickly and produces significant benefits to the Jordanian economy, the government will need to ensure the equitable distribution of the benefits. It might face competing demands in that respect from the Jordanian East Bankers (who dominate the administration, military and security areas but who have a limited commercial role); ordinary Palestinians (who provide much of the urban labour force, petty traders and artisans) and the elite Jordanian and Palestinian business families with whom most joint enterprises will probably be established.

[70] A major contribution to the analysis of the economic needs of peace was undertaken by Israeli, Jordanian and American academics in what is generally known as the Harvard Project See Fischer, S., Hausman, L. J., Karasik, A.D., and Schelling,T (eds.) *Securing Peace in the Middle East: Project on Economic Transition* The MIT Press, Cambridge Mass. and London, 1994. On the other hand, according to academic and business sources in Amman, there was considerable criticism within Jordan of the Harvard Project's attempt to develop such analyses, on the grounds that they were focused on future needs, not on historical factors and political issues bearing on desirable approaches (confidential sources).

[71] Discussion with Dr Rajai Mouasher, banker and former Jordanian Minister May 1994.

[72] A great deal of analytical investigation has been done by the Armand Hammer Fund For Economic Cooperation in the Middle East, situated in the University of Tel Aviv. This has included analyses of possible regional and bilateral infrastructure projects (pipelines, port facilities, water issues including the economics of desalination, joint electricity generation and water desalination, and tourism). The Israeli Chamber of Commerce has also been active in this area, producing, for example, studies of the costs of shifting container loads of goods between the Mediterranean and Amman. None of this has yet been matched in scope or depth of research on the Jordanian side. Even less research appears to have been produced in Syria on such issues.

Archaeology and restoration activity in historical sites are going to be significant elements contributing to the growth of the tourism sector of the Jordanian economy. It is therefore of considerable importance that Jordan remain in control of such activity, including associated responsibility for research activity and the publication of material. There is ample room for cooperation with Israeli experts. Cooperation will need, however, to be on a basis which contributes directly to the advancement of Jordanian capabilities in this area. Jordanian scholars have to be able to deal, in due course, with Israeli counterparts on an equal basis.

Israeli–Egyptian experience of ongoing problems of communication between academics, and opposition to the normalisation of relations from within professional and academic bodies has been discussed earlier. It underlines the need for Jordan and Israel to establish, at an early stage, a mutually satisfactory framework through which to cooperate in this area. There will have to be solid political support at the leadership level for efforts to build normal contacts. The potential for cooperation in other fields of research needs to be explored with a similar view to putting that activity on a balanced, equitable and sustainable footing.

The Palestinians

The relationship between Israel and a Palestinian state, if it gradually emerges, is of course difficult to predict. With an economy roughly twenty-five times larger than that of the Palestinians ($63 billion per annum compared to around $2.5 billion), and an overwhelming imbalance of power in all other respects in its favour, Israel will have the capacity to determine the agenda of the relationship for the foreseeable future. The Palestinian entity will be characterised by heavy economic dependence upon Israel, particularly regarding access for its labour and for its agricultural produce. The economic advantages of closer economic integration will inevitably be weighed against the desirability, in a political sense, of greater economic autonomy for the two communities.[73] The possibilities for technical cooperation will be heavily qualified by visceral political concerns.

As with the Jordanians, there will need to be a conscious effort to build the basis for a more equitable relationship. Israel's economic power and security concerns will give it disproportionate influence over that process. Under the right political circumstances, the relative economic strength of Israel could be used to help sustain support among the Palestinians for the peace process, by underwriting some of the facilities which Palestinians do not have at present, such as a social security fund. If Israel were to endow a Palestinian social security fund with a $500 million payment (roughly the amount of social security payments made by Palestinians to Israeli authorities in excess of the amount they receive ($250 million) plus the amount paid by employers of the Palestinians), that would be a tax burden on Israelis equal to only 0.8 per cent of GNP and an investment fund for Palestinians equal to 20 per

[73] Clawson, P., *op. cit.* p. 79.

cent of GNP.[74] On the other hand, the imbalance of power between Israel and the Palestinians will present continuing risks to the peace process between those two parties. The greatest such risk is that conservative Israelis will insist upon a strategy of compellence towards the PLO, that from strength seeks lasting Arab concessions on land, Jerusalem and Palestinian self-determination.[75]

Conclusion

In the short term, the imbalances of power between Israel and its neighbours may encourage those countries in relatively strong positions (Israel, Syria and Egypt) to pay greater attention to the political risks of regional cooperation, than to the need to establish a durable basis for regional security in economic, social, environmental and other areas. With the possible exception of water security, the political case for cooperation with Israel rather than competitive dealings or minimal interaction may not appear particularly convincing to Arab audiences.

There will be serious reservations on the Syrian side about the idea of normalisation of relations. Egypt will continue to face domestic opposition to such policies. The sustained development of relations with Jordan will require careful handling of the sensitivities inherent in an unequal relationship. In the Israeli–Palestinian context, in addition to such sensitivities, the political differences dividing the two sides will remain profound.

Imbalances of power between Israel and its neighbours are not necessarily a factor creating instability, nor do they necessarily impede the development of cooperation on the basis of mutual interests. This is also true in general of imbalances of power among the Arab states themselves. Imbalances are an important political factor, though, where they reinforce and sustain existing areas of contention between Israel and its neighbours, or prevent the development of more normal relations between regional countries. Imbalances also make it more difficult to establish cooperative approaches which reflect normative considerations, as discussed in Chapter 1. On some issues, notably water, such approaches may provide the only answers to regional needs.

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[74] *Ibid.* p. 79.

[75] Hermann, Richard K., "The Middle East and the New World Order: Rethinking U.S. Political Strategy After the Gulf War" *International Security* Vol. 16, No. 2, Fall 1991 p. 72.

V WATER

A decade ago, analysts were pointing out that peace in the Middle East would be impossible without agreement over secure and adequate sources of water.[1] The water issue is now emerging as a key element in the regional security outlook and as a strategic factor between the parties. Superior power alone cannot provide durable answers to water problems, which are both technically complex and politically sensitive. Cooperation will be essential if deep-seated problems of rapid urbanisation, unbalanced socio-economic structures, and population pressures are to be resolved. Political issues between and within the states of the region will have a significant influence on the capacity of states to adopt cooperative approaches to their mutual needs.

Background

Israel, Jordan, the Palestinians, Lebanon and Syria share a common geology and hydrology on the Jordan River Basin. There is an acute and growing shortage of surface and ground water resources available to Israel, Jordan and the Palestinians. With expectations of a doubling of their populations over the next thirty years, each face very serious water problems by the end of this century. Jordan and the Palestinians face the prospect that by 2025 they will be unable to meet the minimum water requirements for essential human needs.[2]

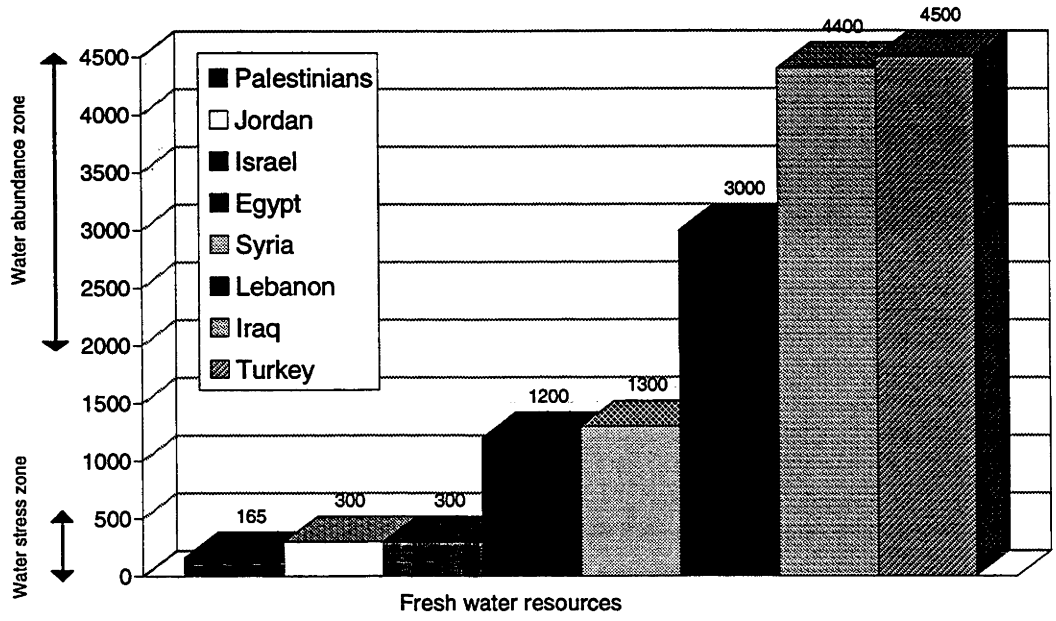
Shuval estimates that the "Water Stress Index", or minimum level of total water resources required by a modern country to survive in an arid zone, is about 300 cubic metres per person per year (cmpy) for Israel and Jordan; and around 165 cmpy for the Palestinians. In 1993, according to Shuval, Jordan used around 250 cmpy; Israel 300 cmpy and the Palestinians 100 cmpy. Egypt, with total water resources available of 1,200 cmpy, and Syria (1,300 cmpy), are in a better position than Israel, Jordan and the Palestinians, but they too will face water stress over the next few decades as their populations rise. Only Lebanon (3,000 cmpy), Iraq (4,400

[1] Naff, T. and Matson, R., *Water in the Middle East: Conflict or Cooperation?* Westview Press: Boulder 1984 p. 173.

[2] Shuval, Hillel *Proposals for Cooperation in the Management of the Transboundary Water Resources Shared by Israel and her Neighbours.* Paper presented at the Conference on "Water as an element of cooperation and development in the Middle East". Hacettepe University Ankara 4–8 October 1993 p.1.

cmpy) and Turkey (4,500 cmpy) are within Falkenmark's "Water Abundance Zone".[3]

Water stress in the Middle East 1991



Note: Total long-term water resources available for all purposes, including agriculture, industry, and domestic, in various countries in the Middle East—in cubic metres per person per year. Countries having more than 2000 cubic metres/person/year are considered to be in the Water Abundance Zone. Countries having less that 500 cubic metres/person/zone are considered to be in the Water Stress Zone.

Source: Shuval, H.I. "Approaches to Resolving the Water Conflicts between Israel and her Neighbors—a Regional Water-for-Peace Plan", *Water International* Vol. 17 1992 p. 133–43.

Any solution to the region's needs for water will have to involve some form of direct or indirect agreement with those countries (Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey) which fall within the "Water Abundance Zone". Israel and its neighbours will also have to negotiate directly between themselves to arrive at a solution, bearing in mind that a simple reshuffling of the already inadequate resources of the region will not settle the problem. Estimates by Shuval and others suggest that at least 800 million cubic metres (mcm) of water per year, possibly 1000 million mcm, must be added to the

[3] Water requirement and consumption statistics are taken from Shuval, Hillel "Approaches to Resolving the Water Conflicts Between Israel and Her Neighbours—a Regional Water-for-Peace Plan" *Water International*, 17 (1992) p 134; and Shuval, Hillel Proposals for Cooperation in the Management of the Transboundary Water Resources *op. cit.* pp. 5–6. Other analysts have produced different estimates and projections of water availability (e.g. Gleik has more optimistic estimates of availability of water for Israel and more pessimistic estimates so far as Jordan and the Palestinians are concerned) but the general conclusions are similar. For Gleik's estimates, see Gleik, Peter *Water and Conflict* Occasional Paper Series of the Project on Environmental Change and Acute Conflict: University of Toronto and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences Number 1, September 1992 p. 17.

water supply for Israel, Jordan and the Palestinians within the next 30 years if a disaster is to be avoided.[4]

The water situation in Gaza is especially precarious. About 95 mcm of groundwater are withdrawn every year, compared to an annual recharge of about 60 mcm. Over-exploitation has led to falling groundwater levels and deteriorated water quality because of seawater intrusion. Groundwater quality is made worse through infiltration of sewerage, polluted surface water and solid waste leachates.[5]

There is also a high degree of consensus among analysts of the water problem that mechanisms for allocating water shortages must be designed and agreed upon before the situation deteriorates further, including as a result of climatic changes, and before tensions between affected countries become acute.[6] Planned approaches to provide assurances of water security may have to be accompanied by drastically revamped conservation methods and consumption patterns. Difficult decisions will have to be taken to reallocate water to preferential and more valuable uses. In Israel, Jordan and the West Bank approximately 70 per cent of water consumption is for irrigation.[7] In Gaza the proportion is 86 per cent. While in all cases one immediate solution to water deficits could be a curtailment of agricultural production, especially of citrus fruits and water-intensive crops such as bananas, lettuces and tomatoes, there is great political sensitivity attached to such notions. Governments are sensitive to the interests of the urban middle class who control large amounts of the irrigated farm land, as well as to the anxieties of the farmers working the land. In Gaza, moreover, irrigated citrus fruits are a key element of the economy.

There is a widely held view that international water law, though immature in its development and application at this stage, must play a part in the development of allocation schemes.[8] Physical occupation of territories that serve as a source of water resources to assure countries of their access to water is not an acceptable practice among peaceful nations, nor is it sanctioned by international law. There are well over two hundred international river basins, and in most there are agreements and treaties on how the partners are to share the water. Similarly, there is little legal basis in international water law for claims by states of exclusive rights over the water derived from sources within their territory. The claim that prior historical use

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[4] Shuval *Water International* p. 138. Israel estimates the shortfall between consumption and existing sources in the combined requirements of Israel, the West Bank and the Palestinian Authority as 45 mcm in the year 2000, 335 mcm in 2010, and 835 mcm in the year 2020. Comparable figures for Jordan are 250 mcm in 2000 and 450 mcm in 2010. Government of Israel *Development Options for Regional Cooperation op. cit.* p. IV–1–2.

[5] World Bank *Developing the Occupied Territories: An Investment in Peace Vol 5: Infrastructure.* (Washington, D.C. September 1993) p 6. The share of water use by Israeli settlers is relatively small, at around 3–6 mcm, which is compensated by supply from Israel through the Kissufim pipeline.

[6] Gleik, Peter H., "Implications of Global Climatic Changes for International Security" *Climatic Change* Vol. 15, Nos. 1–2 October 1989 p.317.

[7] According to Israeli estimates, agricultural water consumption in Israel amounts only to 200 cubic metres per capita per year, compared to about 1,000 cubic metres per capita per year in other Middle East countries. Government of Israel *Development Options for Regional Cooperation* p IV–1–7.

[8] Gleik, Peter H., Climatic Change *op. cit.* p.317. Matson and Naff *op. cit.* p.4.

assures immutable water rights is also not absolute in terms of international water law.[9]

Shuval suggests that in a situation where peaceful cooperation between nations over the use of shared resources is hopefully becoming the norm, the appropriate approach is that summed up in the "Helsinki Rule" of 1966, which proposes that water disputes be settled by negotiations recognising the legitimate rights and needs of both the upstream and downstream riparian partners. Article IV of the Helsinki Rule states that each State is entitled, within its territory, to a reasonable and equitable share in the beneficial uses of the waters on an international drainage basin. Shuval goes on:

> These rules further provide for taking into account possible alternative water sources that might be available to one of the parties, the possibility of economic compensation, and the economic and social needs of each state. They also provide for the establishment of joint commissions for inspection, monitoring, control and management of shared water resources...It is generally agreed by experts in international water law that the principles of the Helsinki Rule apply to shared ground water no less than shared surface water resources, but some nations have not accepted this position.[10]

Shuval's assessment of the legal position is challenged, however, by proponents of notions of "absolute sovereignty" who contend that a riparian state has unfettered rights to do whatever it deems fit with the water (or any other resource) within its territory; and by upholders of "absolute integrity" who maintain that no riparian may significantly alter the quantity or nature of the water before passing it on.[11] Nor can it be assumed that aquifers (groundwater) will be treated in the same way as surface water. According to Naff and Matson, the legal rules for groundwater are still in the process of formulation.[12] The "Helsinki Rules" are no more than non-binding recommendations adopted by the International Law Association on the use of waters from international rivers.

While the extent to which international law may assist in developing solutions to the water issue is therefore unclear at this stage, it is reasonable to conclude that the countries concerned do not have the option of unilateral actions or purely bilateral arrangements open to them so far as water is concerned. Historical usage, geological and ecological considerations mean that each country will depend, to some extent, on the development of cooperation between them if their needs are to be addressed in the medium and longer term.

Although the water issue may be complicated by differing perceptions between the parties of what might constitute appropriate outcomes to suit national needs, drawing up a water sharing plan appears feasible *at a technical level.* It might be based on a combination of additional sources of imported water (from Lebanon and

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[9] Shuval, *Water International* pp. 135–6.

[10] *Ibid.* pp. 136–7.

[11] Naff and Matson *op. cit.* p. 6.

[12] *Ibid.* p. 6.

Turkey); revival of plans to dam the Yarmouk River to add to the availability of water for Jordan, Israel and Syria; and Palestinian access to water from the mountain aquifer and/or the Yarmouk River. Israel could expect to obtain a *quid pro quo* for such an arrangement in the form of a larger allocation of Jordan or Yarmouk river water, or to be supplied from an alternative source of water such as from the Litani river in Lebanon, or to have access to subsidised desalinated water in compensation for the Palestinians' abstraction of water from the mountain aquifer.

Other major means of increasing the overall water supply, apart from improving the efficiency of distribution networks, will be desalination schemes, possibly in conjunction with the proposed Dead Sea–Red Sea Canal, and improved conservation practices including the re-use of drainage water, the adoption of drip irrigation which can reduce water use by up to two-thirds, new seeds and better evaporation control. There must also be reductions in water subsidies and better on-farm management.[13]

Rainfall enhancement may also provide a modest increase in the supply of water, although the downwind effects of cloud seeding need to be examined carefully. Political tensions could emerge if one party were unilaterally to pursue a cloud seeding program that "robbed" a neighbouring country of rain that would normally have fallen within its borders. Early adoption of a cooperative regional approach to rainfall enhancement would help to minimise the risks of such disputes. Israeli economists have also suggested that water shared between Israel and the Palestinians could be managed by an independent joint institution, which would set an economically efficient price to ensure water is allocated to users with the highest value added, and to allow investment in water development projects to be evaluated according to the economically correct value of water.[14]

The greatest challenge to achieving cooperation in regional water management along optimal economic and technical lines will be the political sensitivity of the issue. The question of water rights is one of the most contentious on the present regional agenda. In the Israeli–Palestinian context, in particular, it may be technically possible to devise solutions which address the differing requirements of the parties, it will be considerably more difficult to reach agreements at *both* technical and political levels which each party can justify to their respective audiences.

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[13] Naff and Matson observe that officials dealing with water are "confronted with an uninformed, undereducated public, resistance to breaks in tradition and innovation in agriculture, understaffed and underfunded water agencies, stultifying bureaucracies, opposition from special interests, political wrangling and corruption." *op. cit.* pp.7–8.

[14] Eckstein, Z. Zakai, D. Nachtom, Y. and Fishelson, G. *The Allocation of Water Sources Between Israel, the West Bank and Gaza: An Economic Viewpoint* The Armand Hammer fund for Economic Cooperation in the Middle East: Tel Aviv 1994 p. 2.

Issues

There are two issues at stake. The first concerns the right to exploit the surface water resources of the Jordan Basin, mainly the Jordan and Yarmouk Rivers which are shared by Israel, Jordan and Syria.[15] The second concerns the sharing of groundwater resources between Israel and the Palestinians, particularly the mountain aquifer which extends from the West Bank into Israel. Around 90 per cent of the natural flow of that aquifer is used by Israel, although it is replenished mainly from rain falling on the West Bank. Only 5 per cent of the total recharge area of the two water tables which make up the mountain aquifer is located in Israel proper.[16]

Approximately 40 per cent of the groundwater upon which Israel depends originates in the Occupied Territories. Almost the entire increase in Israeli water use since 1967 derives from the waters of the West Bank and the Upper Jordan River.[17] A further concern for Israel is that prior to 1967 Syria controlled the north-east shore of Lake Kinneret (Lake Tiberias or the Sea of Galilee). The water which flows into the Upper Jordan River and then into that reservoir, which services Israel's national water carrier network, is derived mainly from the Banias river which flows from Syria's occupied Golan Heights; and from the Hasbani river which rises in southern Lebanon.[18] The question is whether the various parties can come to a cooperative arrangement on such a sensitive and complex issue when it is so closely connected to territorial questions.[19] Domestic political calculations and security concerns are certain to be important considerations for each of the parties, particularly in the Israeli–Palestinian and Israeli–Syrian contexts.

The politics of water between Israel and the Palestinians

Israeli, and especially settler usage of water is likely to be a major political problem for the Palestinian authorities and for the Israeli government. According to Winnefeld and Morris, Israeli settlers in the West Bank use at least three times as much water per capita as Arab inhabitants. While all Israeli settlements and military

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[15] Palestinians have not been allowed to draw water from the Jordan River, and the PLO has expressed concern at the agreement reached between Israel and Jordan to share and develop water resources. Arafat told the German newspaper *Rundschau* on 28 October 1994 that "the waters of the Jordan are ours, the Jordan is a Palestinian river from start to end." *Arab Media Survey* 30 October 1994.

[16] See Lowi, M. *West Bank Water Resources and the Resolution of Conflict in the Middle East* Occasional Paper Series of the Project on Environmental Change and Acute Conflict: University of Toronto and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences Number 1, September 1992 p. 35.

[17] Gleik, P., *Water and Conflict* p. 6. Naff and Matson *op. cit.* p. 3.

[18] State of Israel Ministry of the Environment *The Environment in Israel* Jerusalem 1994 pp.18–20. See also Lowi, M., "Conflict and Cooperation in Resource Development" in Boulding, Elise *op. cit.* p. 266.

[19] Schiff, Ze'ev *Peace with Security: Israel's Minimal Security Requirements in Negotiations with Syria* The Washington Institute for Near East Policy 1993 pp. 36–37. The border agreed to by the Palestinian and Syrian mandate governments in the 1920s put Lake Tiberias entirely within what had been Palestinian territory, running 10 meters to the east of the lake's eastern shore. Neff, D., "Israel–Syria: Conflict at the Jordan River 1949–1967" *Journal of Palestine Studies* Vol. 23, No. 4, Summer 1994 p. 34. In negotiations with Israel since 1991, Syria is understood to have proposed that the border reflect the armistice line agreed in 1949, which would give it control of parts of the lake. Israel has proposed adoption of the Mandate period borders, which would give it at least a toehold around the lake.

outposts in the West bank have piped water, 70–80 per cent of Arab villages are supplied by water tank trucks from Israel.[20] Consumption of water by the Arab population of the West Bank (one million people) has not exceeded 125 mcm per year, or around 14–18 per cent of total availability of water.

In 1988/89, the settler population in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem) of 70,000 people used 40–50 mcm, while 560 mcm went to Israelis living inside Israel proper.[21] Projections for the year 2,000 of the Israeli water authorities reportedly provide for a *ten times greater per capita* water allocation for Jewish settlers than for West Bank Palestinians.[22] Settlers' water charges are heavily subsidised but those of the Palestinians are not. It has been estimated that in 1990, Palestinians paid as much as six times more for water than Jewish settlers.[23] Given lifestyle differences between Palestinians and Israelis, there is unlikely to be a locally agreed, common definition of what constitutes domestic use of water, and whether it includes only direct human consumption, or "household" livestock and gardens, or swimming pools.[24]

On the Israeli side, there are considerable anxieties about the impact of water issues on Israeli water and environmental security. Without access to the groundwater supplies of the West Bank, Israel would be denied around 500 MCM of water per year. Relinquishing control of the groundwater is interpreted by opponents of Palestinian statehood as equivalent to an act of national suicide.[25] A prominent Israeli geologist, Professor Arnon Sofer, is reported to have warned that without proper waste management, an influx of Arabs into the Occupied Territories would "finish off the Israeli coast with sewerage, dysentery and typhus". The chairman of the Movement for the Preservation of Israel's Water, Itamar Marcus has urged that Israel should annex the 20 per cent of the area of "Judea and Samaria" adjacent to the Green Line, including the Jerusalem hills heading south past Gush Etzion.[26] On 17 January 1994, the Knesset Economics Committee passed a series of hardline resolutions demanding that the government continue exclusive Israeli control of the water sources in the Golan Heights and the West Bank in any peace settlement.[27]

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[20] Winnefeld, J A and Morris, M *Where Environmental Concerns and Security Strategies Meet: Green Conflict in Asia and the Middle East* RAND Santa Monica 1994 p. 33.

[21] Lowi, M., *West Bank Water Resources.* pp. 35–6.

[22] *Ibid.* p. 42, citing a US State Department document.

[23] *Ibid.* p. 41 citing US academic Thomas Naff.

[24] Naff and Matson *op. cit.* p. 167. Given its restricted availability and cost, a Palestinian village family may be forced to use a single bucket of water for three purposes—cooking, washing and cleaning.

[25] Lowi *West Bank Water Resources* p. 40. Lowi quotes Likud Party 1988 election campaign literature as follows: "Judea and Samaria boast 40 per cent of Israel's available fresh water supply... Water is our life. As such, it makes no sense to place it in the hands of those whose intentions towards us may not always be the kindest." *ibid.* p. 56.

[26] *Jerusalem Post* 30 March 1994.

[27] According to diplomatic reporting, one resolution read as follows:
"The transfer of the water sources to the control of the Arabs of Judea, Samaria and Gaza and the transfer of the Golan water sources to Syria could endanger the water supply to agriculture, disrupt the economic

The Israeli approach to the water issue in the Madrid context has sought to avoid a convergence of the political and technical questions described above. It has concentrated in the multilateral working group discussions on the problems of water *supply* including data collection; on identification of possible means of increasing the overall supply of water to the region; and on trying to build up a range of functional and technical links between regional experts and officials. The Israeli aim has been to confine discussion of water *rights*—which it argues is a political matter—to bilateral negotiations. The supply issue, from the Israeli viewpoint at least, is essentially a technical one which experts should address without dwelling unduly on its political ramifications.

The discussions in the multilateral working group indeed have largely avoided debate over water rights. Israel has been able to argue that a bilateral Israeli–Palestinian mechanism exists since the Oslo Accord to consider core water issues between them. A Palestinian suggestion, supported by Jordan, that rights to water should be settled before questions of regional water management should be considered has not been taken up.[28] The issue of Palestinian water rights is unlikely to be addressed before the commencement of final status negotiations with Israel.

In the bilateral negotiations with Jordan, Israel was required to weigh water issues in the balance of the wider considerations involved in achieving a peace agreement. It eventually made concessions to the Jordanian position for that reason. Whether Israel will be as willing to do so in regard to the Palestinians—and *vice versa*—is much less certain. Israel as the occupying power and as the dominant party in the economic relationship clearly has a stronger position from which to negotiate with the Palestinians. It also has an enormous amount at stake in security terms.

For its part, the PLO cannot separate control over water from the settlements issue. Apart from its daily impact on Palestinian lives, it is associated in Palestinian eyes with other unacceptable aspects of the Israeli occupation. When Israel occupied the West Bank in 1967 it gave the military commander the power to control all permits for existing and new water installations, effectively giving the Israelis power over all water abstraction by the Palestinians. During the first 25 years of occupation, the amount of water available to the Palestinians did not change, although the population is estimated to have doubled during that time. Only 34 permits for well drilling were issued, and all of these were for domestic rather than irrigation purposes and could not be more than 140 meters deep. Wells close to those of Israeli settlers were not allowed to be repaired. Israeli settlers were not restricted from drilling, and by drilling to deeper aquifers, occasionally caused damage to the sources of supply for the Palestinians.[29]

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development of Israel, cause an irreversible ecological catastrophe to Lake Kinneret and the mountain aquifers and prevent the state from successfully absorbing substantial immigration in the coming decade".

[28] The suggestion was made at a meeting of the Water Resources Working Group held in Beijing in October 1993.

[29] Lowi *West Bank Water Resources* pp. 41–42. Winnefeld and Morris, *op. cit.* p. 33.

Among the Palestinians, it is likely to be extremely difficult to reach agreement on any arrangements which deny Palestinians control over the water that is available in their territory. It would be even more problematic that Jewish settlements would continue to be accorded a disproportionate level of access to Palestinian water resources, unless the Palestinian side was compensated in some way. The issue may only be resolved by a decision to allow those settlements which remain to be supplied from the Israeli water distribution network (as at present), and for Israel to compensate the Palestinians for the water provided to the settlements.

On the Israeli side, loss of control over the water resources of the West Bank is going to be an extremely significant factor weighing against arguments for Palestinian self-determination. The situation is well summarised by Winnefeld and Morris, as follows:

> Since Israel's main sources of water lie outside its pre-1967 borders, Israel cannot simply trade land for peace without iron-clad assurances of resource, as well as political, security. To do so, in the case of the West Bank alone, would require the surrender of 30 to 40 per cent of Israel's current water supply and possibly more than 50 per cent of its future supply. This is a frightening prospect given projections that, by the year 2000, Israel's water needs may exceed supply by 30 per cent—even without any transfer of territory and associated water rights. The influx of Russian immigrants has also had an impact on the competition for resources that are already contested by Palestinians and native Israelis. Israel fears that the creation of a Palestinian state on the West Bank could lead to future water deprivation if the new state pursued a policy of deep pumping of aquifers or unresolved hostilities led to sabotage or diversion of Israeli water supplies. [30]

Water security in the wider region

The other aspect of the water issue, which is not able to be addressed in detail here, is the role it may play in the relationship between Israel, Syria and Lebanon. Upon withdrawal from the Golan, Israel would have to deal with water issues without the advantages of being the upstream riparian state in the Jordan basin. With around 21 per cent of Israel's surface water derived from sources in the Golan, reaching agreement on the principles to govern water issues with Syria will be an important element of those peace negotiations.[31]

Though Israelis would be entitled to argue a case for entitlements based on the principles embodied in the Helsinki Rule, the possibility cannot be excluded that, at some stage, Syria may not accept, or may not abide fully by, the limitations to its sovereignty over water rising in its territory. The risks in regard to dealing with Lebanon are less significant, because Lebanon will have a water surplus for the foreseeable future, and it will be unlikely to risk a peaceful relationship with Israel over water issues. Syria, however, will face water shortages because of its rapidly increasing population and the competing interests of Turkey and Iraq in sharing the water of the Euphrates for power generation and irrigation. Syria's relations with

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[30] Winnefeld and Morris, *op. cit.* pp. 32–3.

[31] The estimate of surface water derived from the Golan is from Gleik, P. *Water and Conflict*, p. 18.

Turkey and Iraq are complicated by a variety of political issues, not least of which is that of Syria's approach to Kurdish separatists. Turkey's Southeast Anatolia (GAP) project, a large-scale hydroelectric and irrigation scheme begun in 1983 without the agreement of either Syria or Iraq, has the potential to deprive Syria of 40 per cent of its Euphrates water, and Iraq of up to 80 per cent. For Syria, the Euphrates is the main single source of water for drinking, irrigation and industrial uses.[32]

Without agreement on a regional approach, Israel, the Palestinians, Syria and Jordan will all lose in security terms. Israel is most unlikely to make territorial concessions to the Palestinians or to Syria unless it is satisfied that its water security is reasonably assured. Syria will not be willing to reach a peaceful settlement with Israel unless it is assured that all its territory, including the water sources arising from them, will be returned to Syrian sovereignty. All sides will be very cautious about accepting limitations to their own capacity to control the availability and quality of water available to their populations.

The impact of water shortages will be felt earliest, and will fall hardest, on the less economically developed regional countries. As Homer-Dixon has pointed out, developing countries have fewer resources to devote to finding solutions to environmental changes, and more fragile social and political institutions to be affected by them. As in other parts of the developing world, there are serious risks ahead in the countries around Israel of economic decline, population displacement, the disruption of social relations and disturbances to the traditional balances of economic and political authority if the water issue is not resolved.[33] As the wealthiest regional state, Israel could perhaps cope with water shortages better than its neighbours, at least in the short term, but it would not appear to be able to obtain enough water at reasonable cost to meet its longer term needs.[34] It is unlikely to be able to arrange trade-offs with Lebanon for water unless Syria agreed. It would also risk seeing the destabilisation of the Jordanian and Palestinian leaderships if the latter were seen as unable to protect their citizens against Israeli over-exploitation of water resources.

In the absence of a regional cooperative plan, Syria would ultimately be more vulnerable as well. It may see water sharing, particularly where Lebanon is involved, as a form of leverage over Israel. But a refusal to provide credible guarantees of Israeli water needs would also create a strong incentive for Israel to retain or to regain control over the Golan water sources, and to consider the possibility of retaining permanent direct control of the Litani River in Lebanon.[35]

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[32] Winnefeld and Morris, *op. cit.* p. 26.

[33] Homer-Dixon, T. F., "On the Threshold: Environmental Changes as Causes of Acute Conflict" *International Security* Vol. 16, No. 2, Fall 1992 pp. 88–98.

[34] On present indications, desalinated water will be too expensive to be used for agriculture except for a very limited range of high value crops . Discussion with Mr Avraham Katz-Oz, Chairman, Israeli delegation to the Multilateral Peace Talks on Water Resources, Tel Aviv 25 May 1994.

[35] For an analysis of long-standing Lebanese fears that Israel has ambitions to secure control over water from the Litani, including through the proposed Cotton Plan of 1954, see Nasrallah, *op. cit.* pp. 9–11. There have been at least 13 development schemes proposed for the Jordan River system from 1948 to 1967. For an

The absence of regional water cooperation involving Israel would also mean increasing Syrian dependence on relations with Turkey, particularly if Syria was prevented from acquiring additional water through development of the resources of the Yarmouk river. Unless it accepted some limits to its claimed sovereignty over water arising in its territories, Syria would inevitably face increasing pressure from other regional states, including such (admittedly speculative) possibilities as Israeli–Turkish collusion against Syrian water interests. As noted above, Syria's relations with Turkey are already complicated by the Kurdish issue.[36]

Finally, if it chose not to take part in a cooperative arrangement of some kind, Syria would find it difficult to answer claims made to American Administrations, and to Congress, that it was pursuing, if not a policy designed to weaken Israel, at least an unduly narrow concept of Syria's national interests. It could place its interests in furthering relations with the United States and other Western countries in jeopardy if it was seen as acting in contradiction to an increasingly accepted interpretation of international law, and probably at the expense of regional peace and security.

Conclusion

As water demands increase throughout the region, the possibility of conflict over water resources will increase. Gleik points out that while there is debate about the extent to which resource constraints alone may lead to conflict, but there are direct links between resource issues and economic pressures and tensions which can act as triggers to conflict when other pressures and tensions exist between states.[37] That process will be hastened in the absence of an agreed regional management approach.[38] Types of conflict may range from contests between states seeking guaranteed access to an increasingly scarce resource, to intra-state conflict over relative deprivation and issues of group identity.[39]

On the other hand, while the odds appear to favour rising chances of conflict, the danger of hostility arising from the water issue may also promote, or even compel, cooperation between the parties to avoid such an outcome.[40] The nature of possible conflict, and whether it may be avoided, will depend to a very large extent upon wider political developments. As Janice Gross Stein has observed, in her perceptive discussion of crisis management in the Middle East,

> ...when challenges [to regional states] are motivated primarily by 'vulnerability' rather than by 'opportunity', when they feel a compelling need to redress an intolerable situation, when they estimate that the costs of inaction are greater than the

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overall view of these, see Fishelson, G. *The Middle East Conflict Viewed Through Water: A Historical View* The Armand Hammer Fund for Economic Cooperation in the Middle East, Tel Aviv 1989.

[36] Homer-Dixon, T. *op. cit.* p. 108.

[37] Gleik *op.cit.* p. 309.

[38] This assessment is shared by Winnefeld and Morris, *op. cit.* p 34.

[39] Homer-Dixon, T. *op. cit.* pp. 104–9.

[40] Naff and Matson *op. cit.* p. 3.

costs of military action, they will go to war even if they consider themselves militarily inferior.[41]

If political dealings between the parties are making progress towards outcomes each of the parties find acceptable, the need to find cooperative solutions to water needs may act as a useful stimulus to fresh approaches to regional cooperation. If political differences appear to be deepening, however, the water issue has considerable potential to underline the sensitivities on all sides concerning the future for themselves, and for their dealings with each other.

[41] Stein, J "The Managed and the Managers: Crisis Prevention in the Middle East" in Winham, G. (ed.) *New Issues in International Crisis Management* Westview Press, Boulder, 1988 p. 193.

VI DEFENCE SECURITY

The history of conflict in the Middle East has given most governments ample reason to emphasise unilateral military capability as the overwhelming first priority for their security.[1] There is little evidence to suggest that common security strategies are generally understood or are attractive to most Arab and Israeli audiences.[2] Analysis of security among both Arabs and Israelis has been mainly concerned with military power. Less attention has been paid to security in other dimensions, such as economic and environmental, or human rights. "Peace through strength" strategies have a strong emotional, political and cultural appeal. Even with the conclusion of peace agreements, there is bound to be scepticism regarding the idea of seeking security with other countries, rather than from them.

To most outside observers and perhaps to most of the leaders involved, the likelihood of regional military conflict in the next few years seems low. The defeat of Iraq in 1991 and the demise of the Soviet Union has left a clear preponderance of regional power in favour of Israel. For the foreseeable future, the military dimension of the Arab–Israeli conflict has been effectively reduced to the Syrian–Israeli equation.[3] Ahmad Khalidi writes:

> The Arab military option *as a direct means of leverage against Israel* has not only been substantially downgraded but equally appears beyond recovery for the foreseeable future. The Arab capability to initiate large-scale offensive action or to threaten Israel with coercive/punitive force has been largely reduced to Syria's residual

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[1] The terms military security and defence security are treated as synonymous in this study. Buzan notes that military security concerns the interplay of the armed offensive and defensive capabilities of states, and states' perceptions of each others' abilities and intentions. *op. cit.* p. 19.

[2] This view is shared by diplomats and defence analysts, including Egyptian analysts involved in the Madrid peace process (discussion with Dr Abdel Monem Said Aly, Deputy Director, Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, and Brig Gen (Ret.) Mourad Ebrahim al Dessouki, Head of Military Affairs Unit Al Ahram Center Cairo June 1994). For a positive and forward-looking article in support of a cooperative approach to defence security in the Arab–Israeli context see Karsh, Efraim and Sayigh, Yazid "A Cooperative Approach to Arab–Israeli Security" in *Survival* The International Institute of Strategic Studies Vol. 36, No. 1 Spring 1994 pp. 114–25. The article is premised, however, upon achievement of ambitious political outcomes including the establishment of a Palestinian state and shared sovereignty over Jerusalem.

[3] Khalidi Ahmad S. "Arab Security in the 90s: Arab–Israeli Peace and the Parity Principle" in Wurmser D. (ed.) *Regional Security in the Middle East: Arab and Israeli Concepts of Deterrence and Defence* United States Institute of Peace, Washington D.C., (forthcoming) p. 2.

> capacity in this respect; a capacity that is itself subject to Israel's superior active and retaliatory power and constrained by multiple local and international inhibitors.[4]

Mishaps and misunderstandings giving rise to incidents between armed forces may occur. In general, though, the resort to force or threats of force should become increasingly unacceptable to the parties and to supporters of the peace process, including the United States, as long as the peace process continues. The price of unilateral withdrawal from the process, or obstructionism by any party, will increase. The process may also encourage fresh examination on both the Israeli and Arab sides of the utility of force as an instrument of national policy, provided of course that it generates visible political returns within a relatively short period.[5]

For the reasons discussed below, however, most leaders are unlikely to abandon deterrence-based approaches to each other. And, whatever private understandings or agreements may exist between Israel and its neighbours, there is no prospect that political circumstances will allow the establishment of formal collective security arrangements involving Israel in the foreseeable future. Cooperation in terms of defence security between Israel and its neighbours seems a very remote possibility under such conditions.

Israeli approaches

Despite developments in the peace process since the end of the Cold War, and the significant weakening of Iraqi military capability following the Kuwait conflict, Israeli defence planners believe that Arab military capabilities will continue to grow in the absence of a peace settlement. While the existence of Israel may not be threatened, a new war is likely to be longer, more difficult to win, and to involve higher casualties.[6] Many Israeli analysts argue that even with peace agreements in place, challenges to the peaceful order of the region and to Israel's security will remain, if not intensify, in coming years.[7] In their view, and in the view of some non-Israeli analysts, the strategic vulnerability of Israel is probably increasing as weapons of mass destruction and enhanced conventional armaments become more available in the wider region.[8]

For Israel, the maintenance of a clear qualitative military edge over all potential adversaries, and open and guaranteed access to US technology are basic elements of government policy.[9] Some anxiety is evident among Israelis about the extent of Israel's ability to present itself as a strategic asset to the United States since the demise of the Soviet Union and with the prospect of peace in the region. There is also concern in some Israeli quarters that changes in the international system and in the region could increase Israel's isolation and increase pressure on Israel to accept

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[4] *Ibid.* p. 3. Underlining appears in the original.

[5] *Ibid.* p. 4.

[6] Kemp, *op. cit.* p. 106.

[7] Inbar, Efraim "Pinch of Salt for Pundits" *The Jerusalem Post* 3 April 1994.

[8] Kemp, *op. cit.* pp. 103–7.

[9] *Ibid.* p. 103.

a high-risk settlement. It seems highly unlikely, however, that Israeli influence in Washington will diminish so significantly that United States support would not be provided when needed. The peace process outcomes will almost certainly provide a significant and enduring margin of military capability in Israel's favour in return for territorial concessions to Syria. Israel has been assured repeatedly of ongoing United States' support for the maintenance of a qualitative military edge over countries posing possible threats.[10]

An "offensive-minded defence posture" is probably a political necessity for Israeli leaders so long as Arab military capabilities appear sufficient to endanger Israel's survival.[11] The Israeli approach is one of demonstrated preparedness to use military strength, and willingness to live with the tensions inherent in the need for both deterrence and reassurance.[12] Noting that deterrence is central to Israel's strategic thinking, Inbar and Sandler suggest that "an ambiguous deterrence strategy" may be required for Israel "to be both feared and liked...A small, embattled state may not have the luxury of choosing coherent and well-articulated policies."[13]

As normalisation of relations with its Arab neighbours proceeds, the balance between deterrence and reassurance on Israel's part is likely to lean increasingly towards the latter approach. But the extent of the development of reassurance will be affected by Israel's need to respond to the security dilemmas posed by countries within the wider region that represent a potential threat. It will also be affected by the need to plan for worst-case scenarios.[14]

So far as conventional capabilities are concerned, without going into the technical issues in detail, it would appear very difficult, perhaps impossible, to achieve an enduring strategic advantage in Israel's favour with forces structured for essentially static defence rather than for mobility and pre-emption.[15] In the absence of those capabilities, Israel would be disadvantaged by a lack of strategic depth and a

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[10] See for example remarks to AIPAC by US Secretary of Defence Richard Cheney in June 1990 cited in Kemp, op. cit p. 103. United States assurances to Israel that it would remain responsive to Israel's defence needs are reportedly contained in an unpublished letter from President Ford to then Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin, the text of which appears in Quandt, W. *Peace Process* pp. 441–2. Similar assurances were reportedly given orally to Prime Minister Golda Meir by Nixon and Kissinger. See Aronson, Shlomo with Oded Brosh *The Politics and Strategy of Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East: Opacity, Theory and reality, 1960–1991. An Israeli Perspective.* State University of New York Press, Albany, 1992 p. 128 (citing Israeli journalist Moshe Zak).

[11] The term "offensive-minded defence posture" is used by Inbar, E., and Sandler, S., in *Israel's Defence Strategy Revisited* BESA Center for Strategic Studies, Bar Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel which is reprinted from *Security Studies* Vol. 3, No. 2, Winter 1993–94 p. 331.

[12] Inbar and Sandler op. cit. especially pp. 348–50. Deterrence is used here in the sense of "using threat to dissuade an opponent from attempting to achieve his objective". See Feldman, S., *Israeli Nuclear Deterrence: A Strategy for the 1980s* Columbia University Press, New York, 1982 pp. 24–9.

[13] Inbar and Sandler *op. cit.* p. 331 and p. 349. See also Steinberg, *op. cit.* p. 120.

[14] Steinberg *op. cit.* p. 130.

[15] Kemp suggests that in the Israeli context, deterrence means in practice the development of forces capable of preemptive operations designed to keep the war zone as far from Israeli population centres as possible. Because of the critical role of the Israeli air force during the 48 to 72 hours required for full-scale Israeli mobilisation, any military trends that threaten the superiority of the air force are regarded as undermining not only the defence of the country but its concept of deterrence as well. *op. cit.* p. 105.

comparatively small population vulnerable to large-scale surprise attack. It would face the added risk that its mobilisation of reserve forces could be interrupted by chemical and missile attacks.[16]

The psychological and other disruptive effects, as well as the economic costs for Israel of maintaining a full mobilisation of its forces to defend itself are considerable. Some analysts argue on those grounds that once full mobilisation has become necessary, there is a strong, perhaps overwhelming case for striking first. Attrition is a powerful weapon for the Arab side and one which may not be available to Israel.[17] In a public lecture on the lessons of the Gulf War delivered on 11 July 1991, Prime Minister Rabin emphasised the importance of the possession of an offensive capability in stark terms:

> Israel will deter an Arab leader such as Asad from attacking her when he [knows] that in response Israel [is] capable of harming his army and occupying territory in his country to the degree that may endanger his regime. Such a threat could be possessed only by an army capable of offense...When the Arab states respond to the growing Israeli qualitative edge by invoking push-button weapons, Israel's answer should be the cultivation of conventional compellence in the air and on the ground, rather than building systems that will bury the whole Israeli home front underground.[18]

Despite the threats perceived by its analysts, Israel does not appear particularly uncomfortable with the frameworks within which it deals with neighbouring Arab states in the defence area. Syrian–Israeli rivalry in Lebanon has been tightly controlled. A shared desire to avoid war, and particular aversion to conflict on the Golan, has produced a range of tacit and indirect understandings, and compliance with certain norms and rules.[19] Channels of communication between Israel and each of its neighbours, via third parties where necessary, have been reasonably effective.

The main conclusion to be drawn from the foregoing is that there are no obvious and compelling practical or doctrinal reasons at present why Israel might wish to change its established approach to defence security. Unless proponents of a cooperative approach are able to identify important advantages from alternative approaches, and the regional security picture changes significantly for the better, Israel's essentially unilateralist and deterrence-based orientation, underpinned by United States support, is unlikely to change.[20]

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[16] Steinberg, *op. cit.* p. 130.

[17] Discussion with Efraim Inbar, Bar Ilan University, May 1994.

[18] Cited in Aronson, *op. cit.* p. 289.

[19] Ben-Dor and Dewitt, *op. cit.* p. 301.

[20] Prime Minister Rabin told the Middle East/North Africa Conference in Casablanca on 30 October 1994 that Israel has "...two ways to live with our neighbouring Arab people and countries: continuation of war, violence and terror; or to search and to try to bring about a change in the interrelations, to bring about peace. *We decided to take a calculated risk for peace from a standpoint of strength, relying on ourselves.* What we aspire to should be acceptable to our neighbours and the basic international law". Embassy of Israel Canberra 1 November 1994. Emphasis added.

Syrian approaches

The key point to note about the outlook for defence security in the Syrian context is that the situation which has developed since the beginning of the Madrid process has not necessarily arisen as a result of fundamental changes in adversarial perceptions. Substantial changes have taken place, however, in Syria's overall strategic and military environment.[21]

For Syria, the achievement of "strategic parity" with Israel is a vaguely-defined but long-standing goal. In essence, the Syrian approach is focused on the need to overcome its military inferiority *vis à vis* Israel in order to deter Israel's perceived expansionist aims and its potentially overwhelming force; and to provide for adequate defence in the event of an Israeli attack. The asymmetry of military power between the two states has encouraged Syria to cover the gap through the acquisition of surface-to-surface and surface-to-air missile capabilities, and chemical warfare capabilities.

Strategic parity is also considered to be a political weapon. Asad believes that the level of Syria's military strength is related directly to the seriousness with which it will be regarded in the political arena. Syria has also developed its military capabilities so that it could launch a surprise offensive, if the opportunity arose, provided it had limited objectives such as the recapture of a section of the Golan Heights.[22]

The extent to which strategic parity has been approached is debatable. Although Syria has prevented a deterioration of the quantitative balance with Israel, or has improved its position in almost every major category of armed strength since 1982, Israel retains significant technological superiority. In addition, the challenges facing Syria in using the full potential of high technology systems of command, control, communications and intelligence are likely to pose a constant obstacle to qualitative parity with Israel. The Syrians also face socio-political factors in seeking to narrow the gap with Israel in terms of training, command and operational techniques.[23]

The advent of defences against ballistic missile attacks over the next few years could significantly reduce, though not eliminate, the threat posed to Israel by Syrian missiles armed with chemical warheads. The demise of the Soviet Union has ended Syrian access to its principal source of relatively low-cost, high-grade weapons and seen cutbacks in Russian advisors. The destruction of Iraqi military power has left no other credible force capable of providing Syria with strategic depth or an effective second front against Israel.[24] Syrian aspirations for strategic parity with

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[21] Khalidi, *op. cit.* p. 2.

[22] Kemp, *op. cit.* p. 109.

[23] Khalidi and Agha, *op. cit.* pp. 194–6.

[24] Khalidi Ahmad S "Arab Security in the 90s..." *op. cit.* p. 2. The alleged destruction of Iraqi capability during and after the Gulf war is more true of its missile capability than of its conventional forces. As an indication of this, in 1992 Iraq had around 2,000 tanks and a regular army of around 400,000 compared to Syria's 4,800 tanks and regular army of 306,000. Gazit, Shlomo (ed.) *The Middle East Military Balance 1992–1993* Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University, 1993 pp. 255–6, p. 428.

Israel in military terms may also have been blunted by observation of the comprehensive defeat of Iraq's large but relatively unsophisticated forces during the Gulf War. Most of the materiel and technology available to the coalition forces in that conflict is also available to Israel.[25]

Reinforcing and perhaps perpetuating this imbalance is the likelihood that Syria will have to accept a range of measures to enhance Israeli military security in return for re-establishment of its sovereignty over the Golan Heights.[26] These measures will almost certainly include demilitarisation of the Golan apart from areas of limited deployment of forces for guarding purposes. There may be an ongoing presence of Israeli, and possibly Syrian, early warning stations on Mount Hermon and the Golan to observe each other's territory so as to guard against surprise attack.[27] Pressures may be applied upon Syria to go further than this under the peace agreement. Such arrangements may include joint supervision and verification, through joint patrols of Syrian and Israeli inspectors in each other's territory.[28]

Others

Egypt shows no sign of seeking to alter its essentially stable security relationship with Israel, although it has frequently expressed concern about the regional effects of the existence of Israel's undeclared nuclear capability outside the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)—an issue which will be examined in more detail later in this chapter. Both Israel and Egypt have significant interests in seeing the treaty arrangements between them work effectively, not least because of the commitment to them of the United States and other Western countries, which are important to both sides for political and economic reasons. As discussed earlier, however, the development of cooperation of a normative nature between Egypt and Israel is still some way off.

Jordan is clearly unable to present a significant military deterrent to Israel, but it is capable of dealing with the effects of fluctuating political relations with other Arab states, particularly Syria. Matched against those forces, with the added benefit of difficult terrain for armour to cross from the area bordering Iraq, and the likelihood of strong air support from Israel or the United States, the Jordanian defence capability is a modest but reasonably credible deterrent to overt military aggression.[29] As noted earlier, there is some recognition on the Israeli side of the advantages of Jordan being able unilaterally to deny key territory to potential

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[25] Gilboa, Amos "The Syrian Armed Forces" in Gazit (1993) *op. cit.* p. 189.

[26] These are no doubt among the "objective conditions" for peace referred to by President Asad on 10 September 1994, which were discussed in Chapter 4.

[27] Schiff, Z., *Peace with Security: Israel's Minimal Security Requirements in Negotiations with Syria* The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy Paper No. 34, Washington D.C., 1993 pp. 98–9.

[28] *Ibid.* p. 101. See also *Ha'aretz* 21 January 1994.

[29] Kemp notes the importance of Jordan to Israel and the US as a buffer state, and suggests that both governments would seek to protect it from overt threats. *op. cit.* p. 32.

adversaries until the threat has been dealt with through other channels, including, if necessary, Israeli intervention.[30]

A *Palestinian* state, if it emerges, will be virtually devoid of any military capability beyond a fairly large police force.[31] Deterrence strategies based on military means *vis à vis* Israel are not likely to be a realistic option for the Palestinian entity. Lebanon will have little choice but to accept defence security arrangements worked out between Syria and Israel. It will not be in a position to deter either country militarily for the foreseeable future.

Low-intensity action such as that undertaken by Hezbollah in Southern Lebanon and terrorist activity in the West Bank, Gaza and in Israel proper poses no real threat to Israel's national security, but it has considerable "psycho-political impact".[32] Its effects may be felt on the capacity of the Israeli government to persuade its voters to accept risks in order to strengthen relations with Arab states including Syria, where those states demonstrate reluctance to condemn such activity, or to act against organisations which foster it. As an Israeli columnist has commented:

> Just as Palestinian terrorism might determine whether the Oslo Agreement becomes an electoral asset or burden for the Rabin government, Shi'ite terrorism in Lebanon will dictate both the future of the peace agreement with Syria and its electoral implications. Israel's withdrawal from the Golan, and tours to Damascus, can wait...Not so terrorism...Rabin cannot allow himself the slightest hint of a concession on the Golan, while Syria's proxies are killing Israeli soldiers. The Republicans will make mincemeat of Clinton, if he seeks Congressional authorisation to dispatch troops to an area where Shi'ite troops are located. Under such conditions, a proposal to drop Syria from the terrorism list would not even pass the Democratic caucus."[33]

Medium to longer term issues

While the overall outlook for the next few years is not encouraging, among countries whose political interests are largely compatible–as between Israel and Jordan, for example–the process of dialogue and reassurance of one's peaceful intentions may eventually achieve a set of principles, norms and rules that govern the military dimension of their relations. Cooperative approaches in such circumstances tend to focus on promoting the improvement of political relations, rather than the manipulation of the military balance. Such an approach would not

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[30] King Hussein requested US reconnaissance and air strikes against Syrian forces during the 1970 Syrian invasion. Although Hussein ruled out Israeli land intervention in Jordan on his behalf, Israeli mobilisation and deployment of armour on the Golan Heights along the Syrian flank almost certainly played a part in bringing about eventual Syrian withdrawal. Kissinger, Henry *The White House Years* Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1979 pp. 617–31. See also Quandt, W., *op. cit.* pp. 101–8, and Quandt, W,. *Decade of Decisions: American Policy Toward the Arab–Israeli Conflict, 1967–1976*, University of California Press Berkeley 1977 pp. 116–8.

[31] Schiff, Z., *Security for Peace: Israel's Minimal Security Requirements in Negotiations with the Palestinians* The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Washington D.C., Policy Paper No. 15, 1989 pp. 52–4.

[32] The term is used by Khalidi A., *op. cit.* p. 2.

[33] Akiva Eldar "Terrorism is the Key" *Ha'aretz* 3 January 1995 p.B1.

apply, however, among competitive countries–such as Syria and Israel, and perhaps Israel and Egypt. The objective of cooperative security approaches in essentially competitive situations, especially in specific areas of arms control, is to bring about a stable and predictable balance of military forces that would reduce the risks of conflict arising from an adversarial political relationship.[34]

Competitive approaches rather than cooperation may not preclude specific measures to improve defence security. The progress made in East–West arms control negotiations before 1990 demonstrates that an essentially adversarial or competitive political relationship does not necessarily rule out mutual agreement. Interests may overlap, and there is often a shared desire to promote stability and to improve relations despite the existence of important differences. The risks inherent even in well-managed competition may bring about concerted efforts at the leadership level to achieve concrete results in the defence area, including in regard to arms control. A need to address practical military issues—such as force structures, and deployments of weapons systems—may be a means of opening up the process of negotiation between leaders. [35]

Daalder makes the point that politics is not merely an input of arms control, but also a potential output. By creating rules, institutionalising codes of conduct, and establishing arrangements around which expectations of future state behaviour can converge, arms control can and does affect the nature of political relations among states.[36] Obviously, the challenge of developing such an approach would be less formidable after the conclusion of peace agreements.

Parity and mutuality

Ahmad Khalidi advances the interesting argument that the post settlement regional security structure should serve to pre-empt both sides' military options, thus creating a nominal "parity" based on mutual incapacity to wage war.[37] This mutual incapacity, he suggests, would replace the current imbalance in terms of power. In support of his argument, Khalidi points to the operational obstacles to the use of force, as well as mutually binding commitments to preserve the peace, which a peace agreement will put in place between Israel and Syria. He argues that with these constraints in position after a settlement, the use of force should become irrelevant as an issue between the parties.

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[34] Daalder, Ivo *Cooperative Arms Control: A New Agenda for the Post-Cold War Era* Center for International Security Studies University of Maryland, October 1992, pp. 9–11.

[35] Kemp has advanced several plausible reasons why some progress may be achievable regarding arms control in the Arab–Israel context. These include the dangers of war and the costs of maintaining deterrence capabilities if military procurement trends continue; the risk to regional leaders that major powers will impose intrusive arms control regimes upon those states involved in regional conflicts; and the wisdom of avoiding wars arising through miscalculation. Kemp *op. cit.* pp. 154–5.

[36] Daalder *op. cit.* p. 8.

[37] Khalidi, "Arab Security in the 90s" p. 8.

Khalidi further suggests that the existence of diverse threat perceptions and other geo-strategic realities can be dealt with among the parties by mutual agreement on asymmetries in force structure, in the ways security arrangements are applied on the ground, and by using diverse phasing of arrangements and trade-offs. He argues, for example, that trade-offs can be made between Israeli "quality" and Arab "quantity". Restrictions on Israeli air power capabilities (such as the acquisition of new strike aircraft) could be matched by trade-offs against other Arab components such as armour.[38]

While it is an innovative and forward looking argument, the approach Khalidi advocates presents a number of practical and doctrinal problems. These problems deserve exploration here in some detail, because they underline the range of issues which the development of a cooperative approach to defence security in the Arab–Israeli context would need to overcome.

Khalidi's argument is premised on the notion that although practical security measures may apply different constraints to each party, the principle of mutuality must be enforced. Parity would not allow, for example, for either side's missile or air power capabilities to be free from constraints, while unilateral limitations were imposed on the other side. He argues that both sides would need to abandon those aspects of their force structure and doctrine that would negate a movement away from offensive or war-fighting strategies.[39]

Achieving agreement on such an approach is not possible in the foreseeable future. The challenge posed by Khalidi's concept would be to harmonise different national security priorities in the context of overlapping zones of conflict and potential threat, on one hand, and significant differences in force capabilities and threat perceptions among member states on the other.[40] As discussed above, although Syria has very limited offensive first-strike capabilities, the political, ideological and strategic roots of Syria's commitment to matching Israel's offensive orientation are firmly established. In other Arab countries, especially Egypt, there would be political resistance to the notion of perpetual military inferiority.

On the other side of the equation, Israel's acceptance of the notion of mutuality in the regional context would only follow an assessment that the threat to Israel from neighbouring Arab countries had diminished to a point which made such change both necessary and possible.[41] Israel would insist, nevertheless, on preserving a capability to deter threats from *beyond* its immediate region, including an offensive air force capability. Its neighbours would have to be reconciled somehow to that

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[38] Khalidi also makes the important observation that agreed limitations on military capability must take into account the security needs of Arab states in regard to each other, as well as possible threats from external parties such as Turkey or Iran. Allowing for the creation of a relatively secure inter-Arab balance will need to be an essential part of any regional arrangement. *Ibid.* pp. 15–16.

[39] *Ibid.* pp. 9–10.

[40] Khalidi points out that developments in the Gulf, the Nile Valley, the Arab Maghreb, the "Northern tier", the Southern Mediterranean etc. constitute distinct but overlapping potential threats to the Arab–Israeli core and vice versa, and that the future of Iraq directly affects both the Arab–Israeli and Gulf domains. *ibid.* p. 12.

[41] *Ibid.* p. 11.

approach. In other words, to bring about a willingness on Israel's part to renounce the active use of force as an instrument of policy would require more than the conclusion of peace treaties with the Arab countries, and the provision of credible security guarantees by the United States. It would also require the retention of an enduring military imbalance in Israel's favour.

On the Arab side, the forces necessary for the credible defence of a large country such as Syria will necessarily provide it with an offensive capability *vis-à-vis* its smaller neighbours. The "Treaty of Brotherhood, Co-operation and Co-ordination" ratified between Beirut and Damascus on 22 May 1991, and the "defence pact" signed between the two countries in September 1991 sanctions the presence of Syrian forces in Lebanon. These forces are not subject to the orders of Lebanese military leaders, and the Lebanese parliament has no say regarding the spread, composition or size of the forces. Syria is unlikely to be attracted to any proposals which diminished its capacity to deal from a position of strength with Lebanon or its other Arab neighbours.[42]

Even with a focus restricted to conventional capabilities, it is also very difficult to see how to give practical effect to the principles of parity and mutuality. There would be considerable difficulty in arriving at unambiguous distinctions between offensive and defensive military capabilities, since it may be argued that an effective defence requires the capacity to undertake counter-offensive operations to regain lost territory.[43]

An intensive dialogue therefore would be required to reach agreement on how to structure, train, equip and deploy forces to defend national territory, without posing an offensive threat to the territory of other states. This would raise such questions as the level of tactical counter-offensive forces countries would be willing to concede to each other; the manner in which forces should be deployed, including the location of mobile and armoured counter-offensive capabilities; the level of peace-time readiness of active units and the nature of mobilisation systems; and the location and quantity of logistical support available to the armed forces.[44] The implementation of such agreements would need to be accompanied by agreed but highly intrusive monitoring and verification procedures on both sides. The arrangements would also need to be able to deal with abrogation of the agreements by any party.

All sides might be willing, in time, to accept higher thresholds of risk from each other. But it would be too much to expect Arab and Israeli leaders to address these complications among themselves, as cooperative security proponents might envisage, even on a bilateral basis. For example, though possible in theory, one could hardly imagine King Hussein supporting among fellow Arab leaders Israeli demands to be permitted a significantly greater level of air power than its

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[42] Nasrallah, Fida *op. cit.* p. 8.

[43] Daalder *op. cit.* p. 35.

[44] Daalder *op. cit.* p. 36.

neighbours. It would be one thing for the Jordanian leadership to assess that Israel might have a legitimate need for such capability, because it needed to be able to deter Iraq or Iran, Libya or Algeria. The Jordanians could easily conclude that Jordan should be comfortable in the knowledge that such air power also would be available to support it in extreme circumstances. It would be much more difficult to express a view on that issue, however, while extolling the virtues of mutual cooperation on a region-wide basis.

Weapons of mass destruction

Doctrinal changes such as those embodied in Khalidi's approach would be vigorously opposed by many Israeli analysts and politicians, concerned about the unpredictability of regional trends and the uncertain longevity of Arab regimes.[45] Abandonment of a capability for "offensive deterrence" would also call into question the long-standing Israeli commitment to the maintenance of an undeclared nuclear deterrent, and the basis of Israel's policy of maintaining an unsafeguarded nuclear program. These are highly contentious issues within Israeli intellectual and security circles.

The issues surrounding the "opacity" (to use Aronson's term[46]) of Israel's nuclear capability are linked to the question of who or what would guarantee Israel's survival, if one of the reasons for Arab restraint towards Israel has been its independent nuclear option, and that option was removed. Some analysts contend that Israeli nuclear policy must be open and explicit in order to provide the benefits of security and peace, arguing that accurate perceptions of the cost involved in suffering nuclear retaliation, and political flexibility on Israel's part including withdrawal to lines approximating those held prior to 1967 would deter Arab attacks designed to challenge Israel's survival.[47] Aronson, who is concerned about the risks of stimulating Arab nuclear counter efforts to such an open Israeli stance, appears to favour further development of Israel's nuclear option as a deterrent and as a means of defeating conventional assaults, plus limitations on the sovereignty of Iraq, and a US-supported regional security system in which Israel retained an "opaque" nuclear capability. [48]

Underlying Israeli concerns is a view that Arab states demand Israeli nuclear disarmament while pursuing aims which may have more to do with inter-Arab or Arab–Iranian rivalries than with Israel; and that such states pose major strategic dilemmas for Israel. Aronson, for example, contends that "naked power" is a source of pride, self-respect and stability in otherwise divided Arab societies, and that "radical" Arabs will stress their demand to disarm Israel, while pursuing their own aims, which in turn would justify Israel's quest for a nuclear monopoly.[49] Other

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[45] See the comments of Efraim Inbar noted above.

[46] Aronson, *op. cit.* pp. 227–8.

[47] Feldman, S. *op. cit.* pp. 4–6.

[48] Aronson *op. cit.* p. 274.

[49] *Ibid.* p. 228.

analysts have argued that moderate Arab states are likely to acquire chemical, biological and even nuclear weapons if Israel openly deploys a nuclear armed missile and fighter force.[50] Some Israelis have even questioned the capacity of Arab governments to use those weapons according to notions of rationality applied elsewhere.[51]

From the Arab perspective, Israel's nuclear weapons far exceed its defence needs.[52] It is seen as evidence of Israeli determination to remain the predominant regional power. While chemical weapons are not viewed as correcting the imbalance of capabilities, they are regarded as a deterrent against Israeli nuclear blackmail while Arab nuclear capabilities are limited.[53] Most Arab states have continued to link the Israeli position on nuclear weapons and the NPT to their acceptance of limits on chemical weapons and participation in the Chemical Weapons Convention.[54] The Arab stance also emerged in 1994 as a key obstacle to the indefinite renewal of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1995.

While it presents an important part of the picture, particularly in regard to Syria, explanations of the Arab stance which focus essentially on Arab military and strategic reactions to Israel's nuclear deterrent are less than adequate. Israel's possession of nuclear weapons is insufficient to explain the development of chemical weapons on the part of Egypt, which is at peace with Israel, or by Iraq, Iran, and Libya. It also does not fully explain the efforts of Iraq, Pakistan and Libya to develop or deploy nuclear capabilities.[55] In these cases, motivating forces appear to include overlapping security concerns, including the strategic dilemmas posed by extra-regional parties (India in the case of Pakistan; and Iran in the case of Iraq). The strategic threat posed by those extra-regional countries is clearly greater than the threat posed by Israel.[56]

Political and psychological factors are also significant motivating factors.[57] Kemp makes the point that the acquisition of advanced weapons and delivery systems are important political steps. He writes:

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[50] Cordesman Anthony H., "The Uses and Abuses of Military Power" in Kipper and Saunders *op. cit.* p. 177.

[51] Yigal Allon argued that the Arabs were irrational, emotional and competitive among themselves to a degree that would make their nuclear threats much more credible than Israeli threats "due to our humanistic and rational tradition...With nuclear weapons the Arabs would carry the day, thanks to Arab irresponsibility". Allon, Yigal *A Curtain of Sand* Hakibbutz Hameuchad, Tel Aviv, 1968 edition p. 401, cited in Aronson, *op. cit.* p. 131.

[52] Kemp *op. cit.* p. 71.

[53] *Ibid.* p. 108.

[54] In 1993, when the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) was opened for signature, the Syrian press described the treaty as an attempt to disarm the Arabs and deprive them of a deterrent. Steinberg, *op. cit.* p. 132.

[55] Daalder *op. cit.* p. 48 provides an overview of advanced weapons programs in the Middle East, South Asia, East Asia and other regions.

[56] Kemp makes the point that it is difficult to imagine an Arab–Israeli agreement to limit nuclear weapons which ignored the nuclear capacities of Iran and Pakistan *op. cit.* p. 168.

[57] Aronson speculates that the driving force behind the crusade by Heikal during the 1970s for Egypt to acquire nuclear weapons was his belief that the Arabs "needed the bomb in order to count more—much

> Prestige, status and the fear of appearing weaker than one's neighbours are central elements of national security. Thus it is not possible to weigh the costs and benefits of weapons proliferation solely on a rational scale of military utility. Arab objections to Israel's nuclear weapons, like India's preoccupation with Chinese nuclear capabilities, goes far beyond the weapons' physical characteristics. Until the political dimensions of the proliferation problem are taken into account, regional arms control will remain elusive.[58]

Egyptian concern about Israeli nuclear capability derives from a view that Israel's nuclear monopoly is unacceptable to the Arabs in general and to Egypt in particular.[59] Apart from its damaging effect on regional political attitudes to Israel, the Egyptians contend that the Israeli program makes it more difficult to block the nuclear programmes of other states in the region, including Iran.[60] But Egyptian leadership of the Arab effort to pressure Israel into signing the NPT, and Egypt's call for a Middle East free of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) also have obvious links to the inter-Arab political context.

Given traditional rivalries between Cairo and Baghdad, it is likely that Egyptian concerns reflect, at least in part, a desire not to see Iraq possess a nuclear capability which could be used as a means of rallying Arab support. Such support could only be used to the detriment of forces for moderation and pragmatism in the region, among which Egypt is undoubtedly the most important. Egyptian concerns will be strengthened by the belief in some Arab quarters that the focus for political debate in the Arab world has shifted from Iraqi aggression against Kuwait towards the supposed "hidden agenda" of the war which followed, including its systematic destruction of Iraq's strategic and economic infrastructure. The humiliation of Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi military, according to some analysts, has reopened old wounds and revived collective memories of past Arab defeats by "the West". It has damaged, by extension, those who sided with the West in that conflict. The accumulated scars will take a long time to heal.[61]

Despite Arab, particularly Egyptian, assertions that the Israeli nuclear program is unacceptable to the Arab states, the peace process has made tangible progress at the leadership level between Israel and Jordan, and to some extent also between Israel

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more—in the Middle East and elsewhere. If the Arabs had no bomb, Israel was indeed indestructible; with the bomb, the Jews may lose their nerve in the game of chicken...[Egypt] would have used Israel's own nuclear option to advance its pan-Arab goals and establish the Arabs under Nasser as a regional, and perhaps later a world, power." *op. cit.* p. 133.

[58] Kemp *op. cit.* p. 115.

[59] President Mubarak's call in April 1990 for the prohibition of all weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East; commitments from all regional states to abide by the agreement; and verification measures "to ascertain full compliance by all States of the region with the full scope of the prohibitions without exception" had a clear focus on Israel. According to Kemp, it was explained by the Egyptian Foreign Minister, Ismat Abd al-Majid, along the lines that the Arabs could not be expected to be "sitting ducks" and to allow the Israelis to have nuclear weapons, while the Arabs catch the flak (sic) for acquiring chemical weapons. Kemp *op. cit.* p. 160. Quotation marks in original.

[60] Steinberg *op. cit.* p. 132. Whether this is a plausible claim is unable to be tested.

[61] Gerges, F. A., "Regional Security After the Gulf Crisis: The American Role" *Journal of Palestine Studies* Vol. XX, No. 4, Summer 1991 p. 63. See also Mernissi *op. cit.* pp. 1–6, and pp. 1–17, and Shboul *op. cit.* p. 9 for similar comments on the impact on popular perceptions of the West arising from the Iraqi defeat.

and Syria. It has done so, moreover, largely without focusing on weapons of mass destruction as an issue in bilateral discussions, and without the issue coming onto the agenda of the multilaterals in a coherent manner.[62] This has suited the Israeli side, which, as noted earlier, is unwilling to address its policies in that area ahead of the establishment of normal relations. The fact that each of Israel's negotiating partners has been willing to accept this situation in their bilateral dealings weakens the force of the Egyptian contentions about the damage done to regional confidence by the Israeli nuclear program. There has also been little serious effort on the Arab side to identify linkages between defence security issues and other issues, even within the framework provided by the multilateral process.[63]

Apart from the political obstacles to achieving such a change in approach among participants in the multilateral working groups, there may be problems making a substantial linkage between weapons of mass destruction and the other dimensions of regional security. Suggestions that Israeli membership of the NPT is going to be a requirement for the development of nuclear energy for desalination plants,[64] for example, do not sit easily with the fact that Israeli analysis of desalination proposals has been based on gas and coal energy sources.[65] It also seems unlikely that if Israel wished to develop its petrochemical industry it would be denied access to chemicals technology, even if it should fail to ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention.[66] Arab states would probably be at greater risk of denial of such technology than Israel.

Outlook

The reasons underlying the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the region extend beyond the dealings between the principal parties to the peace

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[62] Discussions of the author with Israeli MFA May 1994.

[63] Arab countries, under the leadership of Egypt, sought unsuccessfully to include radioactive waste and pollution on the agenda of the meeting of the Working Group on the Environment in Cairo in November 1993. In the absence of a consensus and in view of strong Israeli opposition, no reference was made to the subject in the concluding remarks of the gavel-holder. (Peters, J. *op. cit.* p. 25.) In December 1993, Egypt sought to amend the gavel-holder's report at a meeting in Tokyo of the Steering Committee of the Multilateral Peace Talks, demanding that the report be altered to reflect Egypt's emphasis on the need to discuss the issue of nuclear waste, with particular emphasis on the by-products of Israel's nuclear reactor at Dimona. The Egyptian delegation dropped its demand following intense pressure from Jerusalem and Washington. See Feldman, Shai "Progress Toward Middle East Arms Control" in Shlomo Gazit (ed.) *The Middle East Military Balance 1993–1994* Jaffee Center: Tel Aviv 1994 p. 191.

[64] The suggestion that the development of a regional petrochemicals industry could be affected in this way has been put forward by Abdullah Touqan, leader of the Jordanian delegations to the Arms Control and Regional Security working group of the Madrid multilaterals during discussions with DFAT officials in Canberra and in a seminar at the Centre for Middle Eastern and Central Asian Studies at the Australian National University on 13 September 1994.

[65] Fishelson, Gideon "Joint Electricity Generation and Water Desalination Plant" in *Peace Projects* (The Armand Hammer Fund for Economic Cooperation in the Middle East University of Tel Aviv 1992) p. 15. Hammer suggests that the choice is between gas-fired small-scale plants and coal-fired large scale plants. In the Wadi Arava, desalination would be powered by hydro-electricity generated from the proposed Dead Sea–Red Sea canal.

[66] This argument, like that mentioned above regarding the NPT, was made by Dr Abdullah Touqan.

process. There are genuine strategic dilemmas for Israel posed by ongoing efforts of Arab states and Iran to acquire nuclear, chemical and biological weapons for reasons which are not exclusively related to Israeli nuclear capabilities. The fact that those countries can point to strategic dilemmas of their own regarding Israel as a reason for pursuing those weapons makes little impact on Israelis. Their analysis of the problem suggests, with a high level of plausibility, that political factors beyond Israel's control will see those countries continue to seek those weapons. The political circumstances under which countries such as Iran and Pakistan might be brought into a Middle East nuclear free zone will be subject to different considerations to those that will contribute to an Arab–Israeli peace.

Conclusions

Obviously, weapons of mass destruction pose formidable obstacles to the development of an environment conducive to a cooperative approach to defence security. This is particularly so among countries where, as Daalder points out, major actors continue to accept the idea that force is not only a legitimate but also a potentially profitable means for achieving political ends.[67] The intertwining of the defence security issues arising from the Arab–Israeli conflict with intra-Arab and Arab–Iranian disputes complicates the search for cooperative solutions still further. But in the absence of a regional peace agreement and limits on Arab conventional forces, Israel is fundamentally unwilling to compromise its strategic deterrent capability.[68] It will not give up its nuclear deterrent so long as there is a possibility of Iran going nuclear.[69]

For the foreseeable future, specific measures to give effect to arms control objectives in the region will need to be compatible with an assumption of competitive rather than cooperative relations between the major players.[70] So far as the Madrid process is concerned, the Arab states will continue to insist that the question of Israel's nuclear capability must be placed on the regional agenda, but they are unlikely to ignore altogether the need for confidence-building measures, or to allow the nuclear issue to be a serious impediment to the development of bilateral relations at the government level.

The Israeli approach will remain centred on the need for confidence-building measures such as the pre-notification of large-scale military exercises, the development of hotlines and crisis prevention mechanisms and verification

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[67] Daalder *op. cit.* p. 49.

[68] Steinberg *op. cit.* pp. 138–9

[69] Asked in April 1994 whether he expected pressure on Israel to join the NPT, and whether it was conceivable that Israel would sign the treaty, Prime Minister Rabin replied " I don't believe there will be major problems for Israel on this issue. We have seen that the NPT did not prevent Iraq, which signed this agreement, from developing its nuclear capability. We see Iran continuing to make real efforts in this direction. This is what decides Israel's policy on these matters, and not agreements that have proved to be ineffective." *Jerusalem Post* 13 April 1994.

[70] Daalder *op. cit.* p. 53.

procedures. Israelis will continue to contend that restraints on strategic systems and the issue of nuclear weapons should be seen as the last stage in that process.[71] Israel will present a strongly-argued case to the US Administration that it should not be asked to make concessions in regard to its deterrent capability, including in the nuclear area, which could be more than the Israeli domestic political climate can bear while territorial and other concessions are being considered as part of peace agreements, and while the threat of a nuclear Iran remains.[72]

Despite the high degree of intractability of both the Israeli and Arab sides on the issue of weapons of mass destruction, there are good reasons for seeking agreement on measures designed to develop the defensive character of military forces without unduly limiting capability to protect national interests. The Arms Control and Regional Security Working Group established under the Madrid process has already gone a long way towards producing a declaration of principles and guidelines to this effect. Other confidence-building projects and information-sharing activities among officials may contribute to some degree to the enhancement of communication between the parties, and to the cultivation of a more promising climate for a cooperative approach among wider audiences. Trust building is a gradual process, in which progress towards the goals of governments and audiences involves a mixture of incremental change and major catalytic events.[73]

At some stage, the Syrian leadership will focus upon the implications of a peace agreement with Israel for the Syrian military. Citing American contacts, Ze'ev Schiff reported in January 1994 that proposals to discuss down-sizing of the Syrian and Israeli armies to limit offensive elements without harming defensive capabilities "did not fall on inattentive Damascus ears". If the Syrian side was to make specific proposals concerning military force structures, particularly in advance of normalisation of relations more generally, it would provoke a lively debate on the Israeli side about the desirability of reciprocal concessions.

A shift towards defensive restructuring might not reflect a commitment to cooperation in a normative sense, but it would be significant evidence that there has finally been some degree of understanding reached on the Arab side over Israel's place in the region. If reciprocated on the Israeli side, it would be evidence of a clear preference, if not a firm decision, to disavow the unilateral use of pre-

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[71] Peters Joel *op. cit.* p. 21.

[72] As illustrated by Prime Minister Rabin's comments noted above, many Israelis believe the United States is unlikely to push Israel strongly on the NPT issue. Commentator Pinhas Inbari claims that the US "is pressing Egypt more, and Israel less" over the questions associated with extension of the treaty. *Al Hamishmar* 16 January 1995 p. 9. Following a meeting between Rabin and US Defence Secretary Perry, an unnamed US official said that although the US wanted a nuclear non-proliferation regime applied to the whole area, Perry did not specifically request that Israel join the NPT. *Canberra Times* 10 January 1995.

[73] In regard to catalytic activity Dewitt suggests that cooperative security "means to provide the...psychological and behavioural breakthrough akin to Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem...for challenging long-held or emergent fears, for overcoming the hesitancy which accompanies political risk taking, for lowering the walls that have been erected between societies, governments and countries...and for transcending the barriers of sectarian and national interests". *op. cit.* p. 16.

emptive, punitive or compellent power.[74] The political and psychological impact on both sides of agreements to introduce limits to their respective offensive capabilities would be enormous.[75]

On the other hand, peace agreements which did not lead to progress on arms control issues would probably leave open important questions at the popular level about the commitment of both sides to those agreements. If leaders are not prepared to question existing security assumptions, wider audiences cannot be expected to do so.

[74]Khalidi *op. cit.* p. 11 and p. 15.

[75]Asked by the author for their views on the most important confidence-building measures which could be developed between Israel and its Arab neighbours, senior MFO officers nominated reduction in armaments and improved communication between both sides.

VII TOWARDS A COOPERATIVE APPROACH TO REGIONAL SECURITY

It is not yet possible to point to any common concept of a security community among Israel and its neighbours. Apart from the working groups established under the Madrid process, there are no regional institutions in place at this stage between governments which specifically envisage the development of cooperation between the Arab states and Israel. Obviously, the Madrid process provides a very important starting point. But, as explained below, there is a need to adopt a more comprehensive approach if the concept of cooperative security is to take root.

Building a security community

Preceding chapters have analysed the problems facing the development of a cooperative security approach. Whereas analysts such as Dewitt would argue that, in the Asia–Pacific context, the process of cooperation is more important than its institutional structure, the political and historical circumstances of the Arab states and Israel suggest that, in the Middle East, the institutional arrangements of peace-building will be of critical importance. The process of constructing a security community will need to be more deliberate, and the probable end results will need to be more clearly identifiable from the beginning, than the somewhat open-ended approach taken in other, less challenging situations. Because of the way decisions are taken in the Arab political context, it is important that such a framework be developed from a very early stage with active support among the regional leaders themselves. Agreement will be necessary at the outset regarding the *basis* on which cooperation will be undertaken.

There may be some lessons to be derived from experience elsewhere. Dewitt has suggested, in regard to the Asia–Pacific, that it is possible to work with and through indigenous "homegrown" security arrangements to arrive at doctrine reflecting the particular circumstances and problems of the regional security environment.[1] Ball has argued that it may be possible, over an extended period, and within a "building blocks" approach to security dialogue among the regional parties, to define regional security priorities which are reasonably well attuned to the needs of individual

[1] Dewitt, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

states, even in the defence area. Such an approach would entail the use of a multiplicity of sub-regional arrangements dealing with various security issues. It would involve various memberships, building on existing bilateral and limited multilateral institutions.[2] Both these approaches have potential relevance to the Middle East.

Establishment of frameworks for cooperation where none have existed before must begin with the definition of objectives for such cooperation, and agreement to them among leaders. Objectives must be sufficiently clear and balanced to attract interest at the highest level. To win support *beyond* the leadership level, they may need to be defined in a low-key way, or with enough initial ambiguity to reassure audiences about the non-threatening nature of the arrangements. Trust-building at all levels must be accorded high priority. Burden-sharing arrangements must also be instituted to underpin that approach, and to encourage acceptance of the basic framework at the popular level.

Frameworks for participation which are exclusive rather than inclusive are certain to promote misgivings about what may be seen as a new form of collective security arrangement. No framework that appears to be foreign-inspired or strongly supported by major Western countries has much chance of success amidst the feeling within Arab societies that the Arabs have been for too long a pawn of foreign interests. Presentation of the idea of Israeli–Arab cooperation must be seen as a regional initiative if it is to deal with fears of neocolonialism. Sharp reactions against over-active foreign involvement in such frameworks would be very likely.[3]

Military and security officials need to be closely involved from the outset of the process. That will probably be an area of particular difficulty for the development of personal contact and informal dialogue. The establishment of low-profile structures such as Conflict Prevention Centres, the building of operational contacts and other forms of communication will be essential if the region is to see the development of personal chemistry in those circles. Networking outside formal government frameworks of defence and strategic analysts may contribute to the development of professional linkages. It could also contribute in areas such as policy advice to leaderships, the education of public opinion, and the development of contacts between support groups within and outside the region. But the process is bound to be slow, and complicated by political differences, including over nuclear issues.

Both Evans and Dewitt are attuned to the sensitivities of ASEAN regional actors who may prefer to retain a degree of ambiguity in their dealings with each other until a sense of community develops.[4] Whether such activity may contribute to

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[2] Ball, D., *Building Blocks for Regional Security: An Australian Perspective on confidence and security building measures (CSBMs) in the Asia–Pacific Region* Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, Canberra, 1991 pp. 4–7.

[3] Gerges, *op. cit.* p. 58.

[4] Dewitt *op. cit.* p. 22. Dewitt combines this argument with support for approaches which focus less on formal organisation and more on the institution of multilateralism. He suggests that multilateralism is "grounded in

trust-building in the Middle East, or may run counter to that objective, would seem to be closely related to the political circumstances in which it takes place. The perceived goals of those participating in dialogues is of considerable importance. In the Arab–Israel context, where unresolved political issues are a key security concern, the risks of silence on certain of those issues may significantly lessen, or even outweigh, the confidence-building effects of enhanced personal familiarity between the parties. There has to be a clear connection between dialogue and political outcomes.

Targeting leaders and audiences

Although the development of dialogue between peoples, or academics, or semi-official bodies is of considerable importance, its relationship to dialogue between states is very difficult to assess. In the Middle East, the use of second track diplomacy probably needs to have the specific authorisation of leaderships if it is to add significantly to the results achieved by the large number of specialist seminars, conflict resolution and consciousness-raising events now taking place in the region. Two objectives must be kept in mind. It is essential to transform willingness to redefine conflictual relationships at an operational or analytical level into willingness to take fresh approaches at the leadership level. It is equally essential to meet the challenge of developing fresh thinking among a wider community by moving, at some stage, beyond the realm of dialogue within specialised non-government frameworks.

Obviously, a regional framework for cooperation should operate between governments. Various areas of formal and informal engagement between the states of the region will need to be reviewed periodically at the political level if they are to have a serious impact upon leaders. But given the relative political weakness, in some cases, of state institutions central to the peace-building process, the framework should also be designed to operate at sub-state levels. An Arab–Israeli cooperative security framework needs to foster a "bottom-up" approach to trust building activity to complement a "top-down" political process at the regional level.

Both elements of the framework should offer practical and positive inducements to regional cooperation, rather than having as a prime consideration, as Evans's approach seems to suggest, the strengthening of the links between the parties and the UN, and the enhancement of the role of the UN in regional security.[5] There will continue to be important inputs to the peace-building process from some UN

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appeals to the less formal, less codified habits, practices, ideas and norms of international society". Dewitt argues that institutions may evolve and may be a desirable goal, but more immediately and for the mid-term, "multilateralism as process, structure and regularised activities on an agenda of common concern is more important than [multilateralism] as an institution...Institutionalisation is a secondary and derivative issue, neither necessary but not to be avoided if it is universally viewed as beneficial..." *ibid.* p. 23.

[5] Evans describes various regional organisations without making clear his reasons for doing so. His book is focused mainly on the role of the UN in strengthening international security, rather than providing an examination of regional bodies in that respect. Evans, *Cooperating for Peace* pp. 29–33.

agencies. But approaches which are created and pursued between Israel and its neighbours as *regional* initiatives, and particularly approaches which extend the work already under way through the peace process launched in Madrid, have the best prospect of maintaining political momentum. It is particularly important that the parties involved have a sense of ownership of the institutions they create, and that these are seen as mechanisms for working cooperatively through regional issues, rather than as representing an avenue of appeal to third parties.

The elements of the framework need to be presented in a way which minimises the risk of successful attack from critics of the peace process. Arrangements established under the framework would need to be endorsed directly from the leadership level as institutional outcomes of the peace process which they personally support. Keeping organisational aspects low-key and geographically dispersed, at least initially may be preferable to establishing a single high profile organisation. A single body would provide a tangible focus for political criticism. Moreover, debate over such issues as its location and membership would prove distracting, and could be damaging to political momentum for the principle of cooperation. The name of this institution would need to avoid giving rise to controversy over the geographic limits to the Middle East. It is also important for political reasons to avoid prominent use of the word "security". It may prove easier to give effect to such a concept if the formal umbrella organisation was to be known simply as the *Conference on Regional Cooperation.*

A conference on regional cooperation

The development of personal chemistry among leaders to give the overall process political impetus, and to enhance its acceptability to regional audiences, will require a process which brings leaders together routinely. The context for such meetings will have to be designed to enhance a sense of mutuality as leaders, whose countries ultimately depend upon cooperation rather than competition. The problems of bringing about such perceptual changes at the leadership level—including the complications presented by imbalances of power between the countries concerned, and residual concerns about intentions on all sides—will have to be tackled gradually and systematically.

To establish such a process, it will be desirable to create an institution among regional governments whose essential objective would be the enhancement of regional security in the broadest sense.[6] It will be necessary to set fairly modest targets for leaders to achieve as the process itself takes shape and becomes familiar,

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[6] Israel and Jordan have committed themselves in their peace treaty to the creation of a "Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Middle East" (CCME) along the lines of the Helsinki process. That idea has a great deal to commend it as a long term objective, but the purpose, timing, nomenclature and membership of such an organisation all require careful examination. See *Israel–Jordan Peace Treaty* Article 4 Paragraph 1.b. Another proposal, for a Conference on Security Cooperation in the Mediterranean, is unlikely to overcome U.S. and some other countries' reservations about the appropriateness of a conference which would serve to re-admit Libya into the international community while major concerns exist about its policies and political stances.

but it will also need to have a longer-term and more visionary focus underpinning its activities.

Contact between leaders in the Conference framework should be sufficiently informal to minimise the risks of dispute over procedural matters, but adequately structured (particularly in initial stages of contact) to provide participants with a comfortable basis for relating to each other. The informality which has characterised APEC meetings so far would probably exceed the limits of acceptability for Arab leaders, at least until some degree of personal rapport has emerged with their Israeli counterparts. Scope should be provided, however, for a limited number of less formal occasions where leaders or their close advisers may discuss bilaterally those issues at the "hard" end of the security spectrum that they do not wish to discuss within a wider gathering.[7]

In developing the conceptual framework of such an organisation, it would also make sense to take full advantage of the progress made, albeit informally to date, in the Arms Control and Regional Security Working Group (ACRS) towards the development of more far-reaching and integrative perspectives of regional security. The approaches to economic, societal and environmental security adopted by the multilateral track of the Madrid process should also be preserved. Maintaining the impetus achieved so far in ACRS and other working groups would have further advantages of continuity, including the familiarity of key individuals with each other, and of course the possibility of avoiding the unnecessary creation of entirely new processes. A modest secretariat, based perhaps on ACRS, should be sufficient to provide continuity, to review program outcomes for leaders and to arrange basic documentation facilities in support of hosts/chairs of the Conference.

In an ideal situation, the signing of bilateral agreements would coincide with a Heads of Government meeting to announce an action program leading to the establishment of such an organisation. The historical and psychological watershed embodied in the signing of peace treaties represents an unparalleled opportunity for leaders to introduce the idea of new institutional arrangements for the region. There are, however, problems with this.

It seems unlikely that such a politically convenient scenario can be achieved now that the treaty between Jordan and Israel has been signed. With only peace agreements outstanding between Israel, Syria and Lebanon, and bearing in mind the doubts discussed earlier about Syrian interest in entering into normalisation of relations with Israel, there may not be the regional peace equivalent of a "Big Bang" from which to launch new regional arrangements. In addition, the first outcomes of Israeli–Palestinian negotiations on core political issues may not be known before the end of 1998. Arab leaders may be reluctant to commit themselves to the final terms of institutional arrangements with Israel before those outcomes are established.

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[7] While it may seem a small point, the benefits of bringing the spouses of leaders together as part of such a process should not be under-estimated.

The political, cultural and communication problems reflected in the Israeli–Egyptian experience after 1979 have shown that the psychological breakthrough of treaties, though important, is not a sufficient basis for further movement. The cautious responses in both Arab and Western circles to the Middle East and North Africa Economic Summit in Casablanca, following the conclusion of the Israel–Jordan treaty, have underlined again the complexity of harnessing positive individual psychological and political developments and using them to build concrete outcomes.[8] The timing, and the method of introduction of certain elements of such a framework will have an important bearing on whether a cooperative approach is likely to prove acceptable within the region, and workable in practice.

Under present conditions, it would seem premature for leaders to begin to discuss the possibility of establishing a new, over-arching inter-governmental framework for the region. A good deal of preparatory work would be needed to establish common ground around the principle of creating a regional institution, and to move towards agreement on principles for regional cooperation and burden-sharing. This is a task to which ACRS may be well suited. But issues of this level of political importance may go beyond the authority of officials and analysts to develop. A more senior and authoritative working group is probably needed to deal with the issue, building on the work being done in the multilateral working groups.

Eminent persons group

The Madrid process should therefore be steered towards immediate establishment of an *Eminent Persons Group* (EPG) bringing together individuals from each country involved in the bilateral negotiations under the existing process, plus Egypt. Members of the EPG would need to be nominated by leaders from their innermost circle of advisers. The EPG would provide an ongoing advisory body to leaders, and an informal point of contact between them. The EPG may require the support of the Conference secretariat as a research and administrative facility.

Although Syria and Lebanon would not be expected to participate in the EPG in advance of the conclusion of their bilateral negotiations with Israel, their views could be reflected, on an interim basis, by other parties such as Egypt. There would seem to be a reasonable prospect of Egyptian agreement to participate in such a

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[8] The Casablanca meeting outcomes included statements of intention to build a Middle East and North Africa Economic Community, involving in due course the free flow of goods, labour and capital; to examine options for funding mechanisms including the establishment of a Middle East and North Africa Development Bank; to establish a regional tourist board; and to encourage the establishment of a private sector Regional Chamber of Commerce and Business Council. It was also announced that a steering committee would follow up the outcomes, with an executive secretariat to assist in the formation of the regional chamber and to follow up the other proposals. It was agreed prior to the conference that a further meeting would be held in Jordan in the first half of 1995. While these outcomes represented a reasonably good beginning, there was a sense among many Arab participants that the conference was excessively stage-managed, to the point of being perceived by some as an Israeli–US exercise. Arab speakers applauded the initiative of the conference, but warned that economic linkages could not get ahead of political settlements. For comment on the difficulty of building cooperation beyond peace agreements, see Bechor, G. "A Daily Bus Line and Two Bus Stops" *Ha'aretz* 17 January 1995 p. B2.

body, despite possible reservations about Syrian reactions, because of Egypt's stake in maintaining a constructive role at the centre of the peace process. The extent of Egyptian involvement in the EPG might depend, however, on whether the EPG retained a low-key approach, and on the outlook for the negotiations between Syria and Israel.

Members of the EPG would be tasked with identifying the key principles upon which regional cooperation should be based, and developing these in the form of a draft *Charter of Cooperation* for the consideration of leaderships. Taking the activity in progress in the multilaterals as its starting point, the Charter would outline a comprehensive framework of regional objectives, including specific targets for regional cooperation.

In-country activities

Gareth Evans's idea of resource centres can be adapted to suit the Arab–Israeli context, if a modest, low-budget in-country network of resource centres was established under the aegis of the Conference. This network, which would be a key element of the development of new approaches to regional security, would foster support within member states for the cooperative security framework by establishing informal direct dialogue with non-State entities, including non-government organisations. It would aim to supplement government efforts to reduce mis- understandings of peace agreements, commissioning the production of resource materials on regional cooperation for schools and public interest groups. It would also seek to develop understanding of the goals of the framework through dialogue with individuals and organisations, including those which reject the political basis of cooperation.

The network would be responsible for providing or coordinating technical support (including research and objective advice) to governments seeking such assistance in the context of their participation in the regional framework. Through the resource centres network all parties could draw on support from relevant international bodies, or consultants funded by the regional regime, to reduce the imbalances of technical and research capacity available to their negotiators dealing with particular issues. Such support would be available on an equal basis to all participating countries. It would be provided as resource material for all negotiating situations involving member countries, not just where negotiations involved Israel. The end result of negotiations supported by such an arrangement may be a more equitable, and therefore a more durable outcome for all sides.

The network could be tasked with providing mediation services between state parties which request it, mainly on issues which governments would prefer to resolve at the operational level if possible. The network could commission small-scale research into areas of possible economic and other areas of complementarity. Such research could include the identification of impediments to the seizure of regional business opportunities; as well as joint training and development assistance opportunities. The in-country framework would also assist in the

provision of training in conflict prevention and conflict resolution. Staff of the centres would need to be highly trained themselves in these areas.

Provided it had a mandate from participating leaderships, the in-country resource centres network would foster dialogue at below state level across borders. Its aim would be to build contacts between individuals of common professional backgrounds or interests. It would be important to concentrate on issues of relevance to most people—such as public health or environment issues—since more specialised issues tend to have fairly universal solutions. Addressing issues of concern to the wider community tends to bring the overall political and cultural frameworks of societies into sharper focus, thereby developing a greater depth of mutual understanding. Targets for such activity may include teachers, business organisations, women's groups, cultural and interest-specific organisations

The extent to which the resource centres would deal with non-state parties, and across national borders, would have to be supervised by political leaderships through the Conference. Negotiating a mandate from the Conference authorising the network to deal directly with both states and non-state parties would be difficult. The issue would need careful study by the Eminent Persons Group before going to leaders for their consideration. Nevertheless, the concept of a well-trained, culturally-sensitive, achievement-oriented peace-building network, under political supervision, would have a number of advantages for governments seeking support for their dealings with sceptical audiences. Ideally, that mandate would be acknowledged by the states as part of their acceptance of membership of the Conference. Over time, the mandate for such activity may be widened from what would probably be a fairly modest or restricted beginning.

Membership

The framework would have to contribute to constructive dealings with the wider region. It would therefore need to deal in a sensitive manner with the psychological vulnerability of other countries, including those of the Persian Gulf. The framework must avoid inciting opposition from states or leaders of states who perceive themselves as potential targets of new collective security arrangements. The important principle would be to aim for inclusiveness, leaving open the possibility of interested states obtaining some type of formal association with the framework.

It is unrealistic to consider regional military security and economic security without taking account of the central role of Iraq in such matters.[9] Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states also have a military, political, economic and environmental impact on

[9] The potential for integrating Israeli capabilities into wider regional frameworks, including infrastructure development for Jordan and Syria; development of regional port facilities and rail links; telecommunications; electricity grids; and oil distribution all need to take account of Iraqi needs and market potential. For a discussion of Israel's role in regional transportation, including a comparison of port hinterlands as determined by minimum costs of transport, see HaShimsoni, Gideon "Transportation" in Hareven *op. cit.*, pp.116–34, especially map 5. Iraq also has a significant impact on regional water needs, including for Syria, as discussed in Chapter 5.

the region, including the Gulf of Aqaba. Dealings between Iran and Iraq are a fundamental part of the regional security equation because they pose security dilemmas for other Middle East states. All Arab states of the region maintain diplomatic relations with Iran.

While these considerations present strong reasons for associating Iran and the Gulf states with the security framework in some way, such an association obviously presents problems of dealing with Iran and, under present circumstances, Iraq. One possible approach might be to settle upon support for the Charter of Cooperation, *and* bilateral peace treaty arrangements with Israel, as the "admission ticket" for full membership of the Conference. Support for the Charter (without a formal peace agreement) might make non-regional countries eligible for dialogue partner status. Associate member status would be available on the same basis for countries such as Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, other Arab states including the Gulf states and North African states, and Turkey. Given their potential to strengthen links with the region, the possibility of interest among the Central Asian states in associate membership of the Conference should not be excluded. Unlike dialogue partners, associate members of the Conference might be entitled to observe various functions of the organisation, and to participate in those activities agreed upon by the full members.

Non state parties

The framework should seek to deal with the impact of non-state parties on security. In the Middle East context, the activities of non-state entities can affect the quality of the security that governments can provide to their citizens. At some stage, members of the Conference may wish to discuss terrorist activities in some form within an overall security framework.[10] As with other sensitive issues, such as strategic doctrine, defence budgets, arms acquisition plans and the scope for intelligence sharing, the security problems associated with non-state parties would almost certainly need to be approached initially through dialogue between research institutes and "officials in their private capacities" until necessary levels of trust are established at the leadership level.

In addition to addressing the impact of non-state parties on states, a cooperative approach to security should, in principle, be able to address the needs of identifiable groups which present special difficulties within states. Particularly at risk are the 328,000 Palestinians registered with UNRWA in Lebanon, most of whom are families of Palestinian refugees from 1948.[11] This is an area of great political

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[10] Particular problems are presented by non-state entities possessing or claiming to possess the support of state parties. Governments generally seek to deny responsibility for the actions of such groups but most face political constraints in doing so. Most regional states tolerate or even make use of non-state parties at times. A blurring of limits to responsibility and accountability can accentuate problems of perception between the parties involved, particularly at the popular level.

[11] The separation of these refugees and their descendants from the social fabric of Lebanon seems likely to continue for many years. They are unlikely to be accorded the right to return to Israel, despite Lebanese demands that this be allowed. They could not be accommodated in a Palestinian entity, nor would many have connections with that area. Jordan would face enormous economic and political difficulty absorbing a

sensitivity, however. Israel and its neighbours are unlikely to accept proposals to treat the situation of minorities within their borders as a regional security issue. Some countries, including Lebanon, will contribute national perspectives to debate on the issue in the context of the final status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. But none of the parties involved (apart from the Palestinians) are likely to allow the question of minorities in their countries to be pursued as part of a formal security agenda.

Conclusion

Two critical questions face the development of a cooperative security framework along the lines discussed above. The first is whether leaders would be willing to seek regional arrangements which encourage states to deal with each other according to a negotiated set of principles involving burden-sharing. The second is whether leaders would be prepared to lend their support to in-country peace-building activity while some key political differences between Israel and its neighbours remain unresolved. On both counts the answers at this stage are most likely to be negative, or highly conditional. It is appropriate therefore to take a modest view of the potential for developing fresh approaches to regional security for the present.

Whether political will to cooperate may overcome ongoing and emerging differences in regard to defence security is difficult to predict. On balance, there seems little reason to expect significant changes in existing, competitive strategic doctrine among the major states of the region. But it would seem unlikely that a failure to make significant headway towards cooperation in the defence security area alone would be sufficient to prevent the development of cooperative approaches in wider areas. A great deal would depend upon whether both leaders and audiences perceived significant advantages in such cooperation, and the political climate surrounding such proposals.

Under more promising political circumstances, initial unwillingness to address certain issues on a multilateral basis, such as defence security, human rights and minorities, should not present insurmountable problems for the basic concept of a new regional framework. It should also be possible to resolve sensitive but essentially procedural issues such as membership and timing of new arrangements. The growth of familiarity and contact between the various sides in the Madrid multilaterals has been impressive. It suggests that although the challenges remain very great, most of the Arab countries involved in that process, and Israel, may

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further influx of Palestinians. It has already faced the task of integrating most of the 400,000 Palestinians expelled from Kuwait after the Gulf War, a higher proportion of whom had professional skills than is the case among camp dwellers in Lebanon. For a discussion of the grim situation facing Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, see Sayigh, Rosemary "An Uncertain Future for the Palestinians in Lebanon" *Middle East International* 13 May 1994 pp.19–21.

have shifted in their thinking from conflictual stances towards recognising the potential for cooperation.[12]

If that process reaches a point where the parties see a real prospect of cooperative multilateral or joint solutions for mutual problems, this may mark the beginning of a pre-negotiation phase for cooperation in most areas, at least beyond the most sensitive aspects of defence security. But the necessary preconditions for entering the prenegotiation situation involve a shift to a "conciliatory mentality" including preparedness "to settle for an attainable second best rather than hold out for an unattainable victory." [13] That approach is not yet evident between most Arab countries and Israel.

The aim, for the moment at least, should continue to be to ensure that each of the parties has a reasonably clear understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the perceptions and policy responses of other states. Trust-building measures based on information exchanges and dialogue are more likely to attract regional support than proposals for measures such as constraints on specific arms acquisitions or operational military deployments. It also follows that for the foreseeable future, any framework along the lines discussed above would be likely to develop mainly as a mechanism for practical cooperation, information-sharing and consensus-building, and not as an executive, regulatory or supra-national decision-making body.

Israel and its Arab neighbours are likely to remain, to a considerable extent, the prisoners of history and geography. The promotion of interdependence between them is not politically realistic for the foreseeable future. Interdependence, moreover, is not necessarily a desirable short to medium term objective if evidence of the development of ever more intimate linkages between Arab states and Israel at the leadership level adds to the sensitivity, at the popular level, of outstanding political differences.

Only a modest cooperative security arrangement is likely to be acceptable to regional leaders at this stage and for the next few years. But a framework operating between states and within states along the lines presented here would have the capacity to evolve as political conditions allow. Even in its formative stages, such a framework would make its own distinctive contribution to regional peace-building, both at leadership levels and among audiences. It may help regional leaders to shape the political and economic changes which are already taking place within their countries, and which seem set to accelerate.

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[12] Peters, Joel *op. cit.* p.32. The concept of pre-negotiation phases is discussed by I. William Zartman "Prenegotiation: Phases and Functions" in Gross Stein, Janice (ed.), *Getting to the Table: The Process of International Prenegotiation* Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1989, pp. 1–18.

[13] Zartman, I. William "Prenegotiation: Phases and Functions" *op. cit.* pp. 4.–7.

VIII EXTERNAL PARTIES

The development of cooperative security arrangements between Israel and Arab countries will be affected to a fairly limited extent by outside parties. Governments and business, the two key potential sources of support for cooperative frameworks, will look to the regional countries for evidence that the idea of cooperative security enjoys sustainable support, and that their involvement will achieve concrete and mutually beneficial results. External parties may have an ongoing role in regard to crisis prevention and, to a lesser extent, in regard to conflict resolution. There is also scope for UN agencies, experts and non-government organisations to assist the regional countries towards meeting cooperative security goals. The major role of external parties, however, will be in support of the development of processes of dialogue, and negotiation, between the regional countries.

Crisis prevention

Most contact in recent decades between Arab leaders and Israel in critical or potentially critical situations has been undertaken through facilities provided by the United States. There has also been a history of fairly discreet direct contact at the leadership level between Jordan and Israel. Arab leaders have dealt directly with each other, or through personal emissaries, in sensitive and threatening inter-Arab situations.

More routine crisis prevention activity involving Israel is generally left to UN peace keeping forces (UNTSO; UNIFIL; and UNDOF) and the Multinational Force and Observers in the Sinai. International observers were stationed in Hebron in the West Bank for three months in 1994 following the massacre of Palestinians in February that year. UN peace keeping forces provide a means of underlining the commitment of the international community to supporting the parties concerned to reach peace agreements; or in the case of UNIFIL, to help stabilise the situation in the south of Lebanon pending a restoration of effective Lebanese government sovereignty.[1] The essential task of the MFO has been to observe and to report on compliance with the

[1] UNIFIL was created by UN Security Council Resolution 425 of 19 March 1978, following a major Israeli incursion, "for the purpose of confirming the withdrawal of Israeli forces, restoring international peace and security and assisting the government of Lebanon in [restoring] its effective authority in the area". UNIFIL has helped to stabilise the situation in the South, under difficult and often dangerous conditions, but its mandate has not been interpreted as one of enforcement of the Security Council's call for Israel to "withdraw forthwith its forces from all Lebanese territory".

peace treaty between Israel and Egypt. The UN forces and the MFO are not combat-capable except in a very limited defensive sense. They are most unlikely to be authorised by the UN or the international community to undertake activity intended to enforce UN Security Council decisions.

The main contributions of peace keeping forces to regional stability have been the political and psychological framework they have helped to create for territorial withdrawal (in the case of the MFO), and the reassurance they have provided to the parties that agreements entered into are being honoured. The territorial concessions on which peace agreements depend may be impossible without such arrangements. Evans makes the point, however, that peace keeping is not, in itself, a solution to conflict. It represents only one mechanism to assist the on-going peace making process. Although more recent UN peace keeping operations have expanded their objectives and enjoyed greater support from the major powers, few of the early peace keeping efforts resulted in conflict resolution.[2]

The establishment of international presences under UN or other arrangements in the Middle East has tended to result in very long term commitments.[3] Donor countries may of course set limits to the duration of their respective contributions. But external parties may continue to be called upon to contribute, at least until leaders and audiences on all sides are satisfied that the underlying causes of conflict between the countries concerned have diminished, and that relations between them have moved to a stable and predictable basis. The case for meeting such requests will need to be measured mainly against the perceived need for the presence of observers and, of course, the levels of risk to the people involved over an extended time frame. Some assessment of the medium to long term outlook for the situation in which such deployments are to be made is essential. Potential contributors will also consider the damage which refusal could bring about to their interests with their alliance partners; their national objectives as these relate to the UN context; and their relations with regional countries.

The political support implicit in the willingness of the international community to contribute peace keepers is valued by governments and ordinary citizens who feel themselves to be threatened. This is in spite of the probability that the presence of observers may not have much impact on the daily realities of their security situation. But this positive perception of observers and peacekeepers can prove fragile. Although in most cases the limits to the role of such observers appear well-known, in conditions of great stress and human rights abuse, the inability of observers to take a more interventionist role can sometimes be a cause of friction with local populations. [4]

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[2] Evans, *Cooperating for Peace* p. 100.

[3] UNTSO has been in existence since 1948; UNDOF since 1974, and UNIFIL since 1978. The MFO was established in 1982.

[4] These comments are based on the author's discussions with former and serving UNRWA Refugee Affairs Officers, and observation of their field work. The situation of UNIFIL in Lebanon is more complex because of its need to deal with a range of armed groups, and the risk to force members is therefore much greater.

Peace keeping and peace building

There is not a lot of scope for peace building activities amidst traditional peace keeping functions in the Arab–Israeli context. Practical and political considerations—including Israeli reluctance to countenance a more active UN role, and unwillingness on the part of Arab rulers to broaden access to policy surrounding national security issues—have limited UN activity in the military area mostly to observer functions. The value of contributing peace keepers would be enhanced, of course, if their role could be more directly associated with peace building functions in some ways—including civil reconstruction programs, the facilitation of confidence building between the parties, and the avoidance of accidental conflict, but there appears to have been little interest to date in expanding UN mandates in such directions in the Middle East.[5]

The MFO has probably been more successful than the UN forces in going beyond monitoring functions and developing a more stable basis for military security between the Israel and Egypt. Because it has operated within the context of a political settlement, and by dint of the conscious efforts of the MFO command, it has provided a mechanism within which the Israeli and Egyptian military have begun to resolve operational issues directly. But informal dialogue between the parties and improved direct communication through the good offices of the MFO did not arise directly from the mission agreed for the Force.[6]

It seems very likely that third parties will be asked, in due course, to provide a peace keeping presence between Israel and Syria as part of a peace agreement. Given Israeli scepticism about the degree of protection which could be provided by a UN presence, the replacement of UN forces by an international force similar to that which operates between Israel and Egypt is fairly certain.[7] The introduction of a significant United States-led presence on the Golan has been suggested as the main element of such a force.[8]

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[5] Evans describes a broader, more activist approach as "expanded peace keeping." *Cooperating for Peace* pp. 104–6.

[6] The mission of the MFO is "to observe and report". See *The Multinational Force and Observers: Servants of Peace* MFO Headquarters Rome 1993 p. 13. The extent of informal dialogue is mentioned at p. 16. According to senior MFO officers, there is a trend on both sides to use the MFO as an intermediary only when issues are potentially embarrassing, or if one side wishes to make a formal point. Suspicions remain on both sides, but the handful of violations which occur each year (in contrast to the 60-plus incidents each year dealt with by UNIFIL in Lebanon) are essentially minor and caused by ignorance rather than ill-intent.

[7] The UN probably would welcome an opportunity to divert its limited peace keeping resources to other areas of need. It may be, however that Syria would insist upon retaining a token UN presence, and could win UN acceptance for such a stance. There would be no necessary contradiction between a simultaneous UN and international presence, although it would raise questions about the need for such a commitment of resources.

[8] A Reuters report in the *Canberra Times* of 6 October 1994 quoted a State Department official as saying that the United States would be willing to consider a request by the two parties for US participation in an international force to monitor an Israeli–Syrian peace settlement. President Clinton has also indicated that he would be prepared to make a case to the American public and to Congress for deploying American troops in the border area as part of an international force to monitor any Syrian–Israeli accord. *Canberra Times* 23 November 1994.

Risks to the members of an international force to monitor the implementation of agreements would be minimal so long as it was seen as eschewing absolutely any suggestion of providing a combat capable presence. Although the security outlook for the border area would be significantly improved by the conclusion of a Syrian–Israeli agreement acceptable to both sides, there would be a higher level of risk associated with the monitoring of arrangements in the Israeli–Lebanese border area than in the Israeli–Syrian border zone because of the unpredictability of dealings between Syria, Hezbollah and Israel. But with the development of local knowledge and contacts, and drawing on the experience of observer activity in the Golan and in Lebanon under UN auspices, the level of risk to observers, even in the south of Lebanon, would probably not be unacceptably high under most circumstances.

The possible functions of an American presence on the Golan have not been clarified in any detail. There is little wisdom from a military perspective in deploying a combat-capable force to such a restricted area as the Golan. The ambiguity of its mission and the limited scope to manoeuvre would place a third force in an awkward position, and probably at considerable risk, in the event of an outbreak of hostilities. In the longer term, as discussed earlier, water disputes, in particular, may be capable of giving rise to heightened tensions and possibly conflict between Israel and Syria. The Syrian regime will have to cope, over the next decade, with political and economic pressures which have largely been suppressed in recent years. Biological factors alone mean a replacement for President Asad, who is now in his mid-sixties, will have to be found on the Syrian side at some stage. While these challenges may be met without exceptional increases in regional tension, for the reasons outlined earlier the odds do not favour an easy transition to more cooperative relations between Israel and Syria.

If a combat-capable force was established on the Golan, it would be likely to confront the unenviable added task of deciding how to interpret and react to the actions and highly ambiguous posturing of the Syrians and the Israelis over water and other issues. Parties on either side may place an unreasonable burden on peace-keeping forces to buffer them from the consequences of their behaviour as they react to perceived provocations by the other side, or threaten to seek unilateral solutions to increasingly serious problems. In the event of a serious deterioration in relations between Israel and Syria, pressures would increase to redefine the role of a combat-capable force, or to withdraw it, as the ambiguity of its position became apparent. And, as the situation before the outbreak of the 1967 war demonstrated, the withdrawal of international forces for any reason in a situation of rising tension between Israel and its neighbours can lead rapidly to pre-emptive military action by Israel before the situation degenerates further.

It is highly desirable, therefore, and perhaps inevitable, that any international force established between Israel and Syria be strictly limited in its mandate and its military capabilities to a role as an observer and a peace-builder. Rather than becoming part of a cooperative security arrangement between the three parties, the broader question of military guarantees for the security of Israel (and for Syria, if it seeks them) will probably have to be left to bilateral understandings between Israel

and the United States.[9] This appears to be a view shared by several Israeli analysts. Schiff, for example, argues against inviting the US to enforce an Israeli–Syrian agreement, preferring instead to have a major US input to the supervision of the arrangements, and US guarantees of massive assistance in the event of military conflict.[10] The Syrian attitude to the notion is not known. Some Syrians would probably be attracted to a US presence in some form as a means of constraining Israeli freedom of action, but the prospect of an indefinite foreign presence on the Golan would not be an easy one for Asad to accept.

There may be scope for a third force to follow the lead of the MFO in developing higher levels of informal, problem-solving contact at the service-to-service level. External countries may be able to nudge the framework and mandate of such a force in that direction, despite the likely reservations of both sides in developing such contacts in the short term. An international role of this kind would represent, in turn, a useful contribution to the development of stable and predictable relations between Israel and Syria. But significant progress in this direction could only come about in the context of considerably improved political relations between those two countries, which seems a fairly remote prospect at present. The track records on both sides in upholding the terms of a peace agreement, and their preparedness to adopt cooperative rather than conflictual approaches to emerging challenges, including water sharing, will largely determine whether peace keeping functions can be expanded into peace-building activities.

Conflict resolution

Because of the centrality of Arab and Israeli leaderships in determining policy responses to emerging situations, the management of sensitive issues and full-blown crises depends essentially upon the positions taken by those leaders. The extent and direction of US intervention in crisis situations is also very important. So far as the more extended process of conflict resolution is concerned, the role that external governments, including the United States, have played has probably been more apparent than real. The key states involved in the Arab–Israel dispute rely to a considerable extent upon third parties, particularly the United States, in such areas as arms supplies, economic assistance, and debt management. All actively court political support from Western countries. Until the launching of the Madrid process, and particularly its multilateral tracks, however, the United States and other third

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[9] There is a great deal of sense in the advice provided to the US Government in a Special National Intelligence Estimate in 1955, which concluded that "over the long run, the concept of the U.S. as a policeman, even if backed by the U.N., would be a source of increasing Arab resentment, particularly if increasing Arab military capabilities placed the Arabs in the position of the one being restrained." *Foreign Relations of the United States 1955–1957: Arab Israeli Dispute, 1955* Vol. XIV U.S. Govt. Printing Office: Washington 1989, cited by Gerges, F. *op. cit.* p. 65.

[10] *Ha'aretz* 21 January 1994.

parties have not generally attempted to recondition the attitudes of Middle East countries towards one another.[11]

So long as rivalry between the superpowers helped to shape their respective approaches to the Arab–Israel conflict, it was arguably more important to be demonstrably in control of the peace process—and to deny the other superpower the advantages of being the one to deliver a settlement—than to seek to determine its outcomes.[12] Whether the United States or the Soviet Union were ever in a position to bring their regional partners into line with their own views on the nature of such a settlement, and indeed whether they had clear views on what such a settlement should entail, is now largely an academic issue. Careful analysis of the dealings between the superpowers and the region from 1967 onwards suggests that Syria and Israel may have been more successful overall in pressuring their respective superpower patrons than in pressuring each other.[13] Western intervention in the Arab world through the creation of the Baghdad Pact, the support for regional powers such as Iran and Israel under the Nixon Doctrine, and the notion of strategic consensus against Soviet objectives as promoted by the US Administration in the early 1980s, and the present policy of "dual containment" reflected concern for objectives largely unrelated to core Arab concerns about Israel.[14]

US and European dealings with the countries of the region have often been characterised by intimate relations at leadership levels. But the potential strength of the Western position as donors, their often-repeated goodwill towards traditionally friendly regimes, and occasional brutally direct efforts to bring Arab and Israeli positions into line with US preferences have rarely achieved sustained and effective, direct or indirect leverage on Israel or its Arab neighbours. At least so far as matters of substance are concerned, the resilience with which countries of the region have pursued independent agendas is quite extraordinary. The process through which Israel acquired French nuclear and missile technology despite the efforts of successive US administrations to prevent it doing so is an excellent illustration of this point.[15] Arab resilience in response to external pressures is evident in Syria's activities in regard to Lebanon; in the Jordanian resistance to US

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[11] A possible exception to this general picture is the efforts of the US to bring about the peace between Israel and Egypt. But it is certainly the intellectual framework within which Dr Kissinger steered US policy during the Nixon era. See particularly Quandt, W. *Peace Process* pp. 108–15 for a critical analysis of American policy objectives after the crisis of the Syrian invasion of Jordan in 1970, particularly the US emphasis on military balance and the countering of Soviet influence. Elsewhere, Quandt notes Kissinger's "blind spots" towards the Palestinian issue, knowing that at some point it would have to be confronted, but gearing much of his diplomacy "to trying to circumvent this crucial issue, to putting off the moment of truth, to weakening the appeal of the Palestinian movement, all the while hoping that some alternative would appear." *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 9–11.

[12] See Kissinger *op. cit.* pp. 558–9.

[13] Janice Gross Stein makes the telling observation, on the basis of examination of crisis situations between Israel and its Arab neighbours, that "...in the critical task of crisis prevention, the 'managers' were often managed". Stein, J., "The Managed and the Managers: Crisis Prevention in the Middle East" *op. cit.* p. 192.

[14] For an Arab perspective on the US role in the region, see Al Hassan Bin Talal, "A Jordanian Perspective on the United States in the Middle East" in Kipper and Saunders, *op. cit.* pp. 278–93.

[15] See Aronson *op. cit.* pp. 42–4 and pp. 61–71.

and Arab pressure to join the Saudi-led Arab coalition after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait; and in the refusal, despite U.S. urging, by Saudi Arabia to put behind it the bitterness in its relations with Jordan which followed the Gulf War.

Perhaps the only readily identifiable examples of successful external pressure on Israel in regard to issues of *substance* between Israel and the Arab states are the threat by President Eisenhower to impose financial sanctions upon Israel if it refused to relinquish the gains it made during the Suez war of 1956; and the 1992 standoff between Israel and the US over $10 billion in loan guarantees, which the Bush Administration linked to the establishment of Israeli settlements in the West Bank.[16] So far as matters of *process* are concerned, the pressure applied to the Shamir government, both directly and through its audience in the United States, to attend the Madrid Conference was a major American achievement, but it did not have a clear objective in terms of outcomes, and the Madrid process conspicuously lacked momentum until the defeat of the Shamir government.[17]

At least partly because they have ample experience of the independent approach of regional countries to dealing with each other and with their interlocutors, Western countries have been very reticent about advocacy of prescriptive solutions to Arab–Israeli political issues. Core issues such as Palestinian self-determination and the right to return are complex and morally ambiguous. They are recognised to be of considerable domestic sensitivity to the countries directly involved. That sensitivity is reflected among significant areas of political opinion in Western countries. Most importantly, the solutions which may be reached eventually between Israel and the Palestinians are unlikely directly to damage or even to deeply engage the interests of Western countries. Most Western governments have therefore preferred to focus on the process of peaceful reconciliation—promotion of dialogue and confidence-building, mostly within a general framework of support for Palestinian self-determination—rather than to venture opinions on the detailed claims of the respective parties.

As that situation is unlikely to change, it is important to examine what part external governments may play so far as the impediments to conflict resolution are concerned. These issues, among them certain issues identified earlier in this study, include the imbalance of power between states; human rights issues; and challenges to the credibility of Arab governments as instruments for meeting popular expectations.

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[16] On the loans guarantee issue, and other forms of economic, military and diplomatic influence available to the US, see Morris, M., *The Persistence of External Interest in the Middle East* RAND, Santa Monica, 1993 p. 63.

[17] Quandt has argued that although all US administrations from Johnson to Clinton have formally subscribed to the same basic principles (with attendant ambiguities) regarding the core issues of the Arab–Israel dispute, since 1967 the emphasis in Washington "...has shifted from the spelling out of the ingredients of 'peace' to the 'process' of getting there. This procedural bias, which frequently seems to characterize American diplomacy, reflects a practical, even legalistic side of American political culture. Procedures are also less controversial than substance, more susceptible to compromise, and thus easier for politicians to deal with." Quandt, W., *Peace Process* p. 1 and pp. 5–7.

Imbalances of power

The questions of power imbalances between the parties have already been discussed in their socio-economic, political and military dimensions.

(a) Socio-economic imbalances

It has already been suggested that the task of dealing with imbalances of power between the parties must be addressed through a clear set of principles on which cooperation is to be based. The creation within the region of an Eminent Persons Group may be an important first step in such a process.

External parties can play only a limited role in the development of such mechanisms for cooperation, although they are likely to be called upon by the regional countries to provide development assistance and financial support for socio-economic adjustment processes. Financial institutions including the World Bank, the International Development Agency, and the International Monetary Fund may be asked to target specific areas of imbalance in areas such as education, research and infrastructure development. Western countries and regional countries able to do so are likely to be asked to supplement the resources available to international development agencies for assistance of this kind.

In the aftermath of the Kuwait war there were calls for the adoption of an "Arab Marshall Plan" to deal with regional economic imbalances.[18] Responses to such requests will be shaped among Western donors by the existence of demonstrated economic need among recipients for such assistance, the development of plans by international agencies to give effect to the general principles agreed among the participating governments for disbursement of assistance, and the demonstrated willingness of regional governments to undertake the reforms proposed. If those conditions are met, and the countries concerned are perceived among donor countries as making a constructive contribution towards peace with Israel, the process of rectifying imbalances could become part of broader programs of domestic economic adjustment already in place in most regional countries.

The question of support from relatively wealthy regional countries is likely to remain inseparable from regional political dealings, on which external countries have been able to make little impression since the invasion of Kuwait. The logic of combining the resources of those countries with the talents of their neighbours, and of reducing the overall regional emphasis on military security and armaments is undeniable.[19] Nevertheless, the outlook for

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[18] Gerges, F., *op. cit.* p. 66.

[19] Crown Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan has sought, over an extended period, to focus attention on linkages in the region between debt, arms control and economic development, and the need for greater effort to develop regional socio-economic packages as key ingredients of peace-building. See, for example, his call for the development of "inter-disciplinary indicators of security" in *Testimony of HRH Crown Prince El Hassan bin Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the World Hearings on Development: Theme 1: Development, Peace and Security* United Nations, New York , 6 June 1994.

relations between the countries concerned will remain unpredictable for political reasons, and the willingness of wealthier countries to support economic development projects in the region on a large scale will remain in doubt. A World Bank study has shown that only 5 per cent of the financial surpluses of the oil rich countries has been invested in the region in the past.[20]

(b) Political imbalances

It has been argued above that external governments other than the United States are unlikely to commit themselves to a sustained and serious effort to influence outcomes between Israel and the PLO according to a particular concept of what a durable solution should entail. Should they seek to do so, they would have limited scope to offer meaningful inducements, or to make threats. Israel appears able to cope with political differences with the Europeans. Those differences appear, in any event, to have eased since the Declaration of Principles was signed with the PLO.[21] Israel can also point to a domestic audience which is already deeply divided over the peace process as a legitimate reason to reject foreign pressure at this stage. The PLO leadership is too narrowly-based, too vulnerable to its domestic constituency, and too important to Israeli interests in the present phase of the peace process to be deliberately undermined by extended withdrawal of external support. Few external countries would be likely to criticise either party so long as both Israel and the PLO remain formally committed to supporting the Declaration of Principles and the Cairo Agreement.

External countries generally do not have sufficient direct national interests at stake in the peace process to warrant making representations to the United States regarding the desirable nature of a settlement, or to support the US Administration in the struggles it might face with Congress, the media and public interest groups over such an issue. Direct, firm, private representations generally have been felt by the United States and by other governments to constitute the most productive approach to both sides.

The shaping of domestic opinion in the United States, particularly in key pro-Israel bodies such as the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) as well as in Congress, is also recognised by Israelis as an important means of influencing policy choices open to the Israeli government. Some analysts have suggested that the withholding by the US of guarantees for Israeli loans was intended to influence the 1992 Israeli elections in favour of the Labor party.[22] The conversion of AIPAC during the Clinton administration from a pro-Likud lobbyist to a strong supporter of the approach of the Rabin government has

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[20] El Hassan bin Talal, " A Jordanian Perspective..." *op. cit.* pp. 297–8.

[21] Evidence of this is the "special status" accorded to Israel by the European Union in December 1994, in the lead-up to finalisation of treaty arrangements between them. (Embassy of Israel Canberra Press Release 24 December 1994).

[22] Morris, M., *External Influences* p. 63.

probably been an important factor sustaining the commitment of the United States to the peace process, and thus the viability of the Rabin government's stance.[23] Israeli governments are also believed to take careful note of perceptions of their performance by other Jewish communities in the diaspora, but the extent to which such communities have real influence on policy is very difficult to judge.

(c) Military imbalances

The role that external parties can play in addressing military imbalances in the absence of a comprehensive political settlement is very limited. It is too soon to tell whether an audience will emerge among regional decision-makers, or among arms suppliers, for proposals to reduce the trade in conventional arms in the area. The need to ensure ongoing support among the military forces of the region for their political leaderships may mean that several countries will pursue the upgrading of the *quality* of their military capability, at least, as peace agreements are implemented. In the longer term, the economic challenges facing the region may present growing incentives for leaders to balance pressures for military expenditures against development objectives. But if the political outlook for the region deteriorates, few leaderships are likely to be prepared to cut back arms acquisition programs.

Proposals for supply-side restrictions have had little success to date. There is little prospect of such measures being introduced by external countries so long as regional demand for weaponry remains strong. As Kemp points out, regional countries will reject any attempts by suppliers to dictate to them regarding their needs, and to limit their access to arms supplies. Only if key regional leaderships can be convinced of the advantages of restricting their own arms procurement will it be easier to achieve a consensus among the supplier nations to adopt some moratoria on certain classes of technology. [24]

The issue of Israeli nuclear capability has proven easier for the United States to deflect than to resolve. As discussed in Chapter Six, the Arab demand for Israeli accession to the NPT may threaten the achievement of important Western goals including the renewal of the Treaty. It may also jeopardise the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention, and negotiations over enhancement of the verification procedures of the Biological Weapons Convention. But the balance of probabilities suggests that it will be the Arab countries, rather than Israel, that will come under increasing pressure from the United States and other Western countries to moderate their stance on these issues.

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[23] According to Evans and Novak, right wing Israeli political figures led by Yossi Ben Aharon have engaged in lobbying activity in Congress against the possibility of a US commitment to establishing a presence on the Golan, aware that a Congressional ban on such a presence would severely damage the Rabin government. *Washington Post* 17 November 1994.

[24] Kemp *op. cit.* p. 182.

Human rights and civil society

The sensitivity of Arab countries and Israel to external commentary on their domestic affairs, or perceived interference in them, severely constrains the involvement of external governments in shaping regional political culture. The Ibn Khaldoun affair discussed in Chapter Two amply demonstrates how any role which external governments may wish to play in these areas risks being highly counter-productive. At the same time, however, regional governments are not oblivious to, or immune from, internal pressures for changes. The growing awareness among domestic audiences of international norms in regard to human rights cannot be ignored. External countries and key NGOs such as Amnesty International will continue to press the case for higher standards of adherence to those standards among regional countries.

External governments can contribute to the strengthening of human rights through direct discussion with leaders concerning the effectiveness of institutions which regional leaders themselves put in place to respond to domestic needs and pressures. Where such institutions are not initiated by leaderships, or are tightly controlled by them, there may be scope for selective assistance to be provided indirectly to organisations which emerge from below. That process runs a significant risk, however, of associating external countries with the agendas of domestic opposition groups, and the side-tracking of such assistance into a labyrinth of domestic political complications. If the idea of a Conference on Regional Cooperation and its associated network of resource centres was to be accepted within the region, there would be considerable scope for external countries to contribute ideas, experience, training and financial support towards the enhancement of civil society through those institutions. But, as noted earlier, this activity would have to be undertaken within a mandate created by the leaders concerned.[25]

There is also an important role for external governments in supporting the efforts of international agencies associated with the UN which have an established and well-respected presence in the region. UN agencies, especially UNRWA, UNDP and UNICEF have led the international effort in support of the transition period since 1993, focusing mainly on economic and physical infrastructure, health and education services for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. The future of UNRWA is uncertain, pending the outcomes of the peace process, but it remains an extremely effective and efficient organisation, and a key mechanism for the delivery of assistance to Palestinians at the grassroots level.[26]

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[25] The involvement of a handful of well-qualified individuals from external countries in support of such a framework, and sponsored by them, might be a valuable contribution to the development of the institutions in their formative stages.

[26] For an overview of present and projected UN programs for the Occupied Territories, see Supporting the Transition: *An immediate response of the United Nations to the interim period in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.* UN New York 23 September 1993.

UNRWA and the ICRC traditionally have acted mainly as an interface between Israel and the Palestinians, or between Palestinians and Arab host governments in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. In view of the emergence of Palestinian autonomy in the Occupied Territories, these institutions are increasingly in a position to deal with issues which are under the authority of the Palestinians. The presence and activities of bodies such as the ICRC—in such areas as prison visits and investigation of alleged human rights abuse—under these changing political circumstances may prove sensitive for the Palestinian authorities, and to Palestinian nationalist sentiment.[27] There may nevertheless be a valuable role for such organisations in easing tensions between Palestinian factions, between the Palestinians and Israel, and providing training and education in various areas relating to conflict resolution.

The UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) would be well-placed, if funds were available to it, to raise levels of skill in dispute resolution, preventive diplomacy and related fields between Israel and its neighbours. UNITAR could make a significant contribution to the development of the notion of a Conference on Regional Cooperation, and to the development of conflict resolution skills within the framework of that organisation. It would have a major part to play in the training of the staff of resource centres created under the aegis of the Conference.

Assisting governments in meeting popular expectations

External governments, particularly those in Europe which would be most affected by the consequences of regional instability, are aware of the need to assist regional countries to meet the challenges of expanding populations, increasing water stress and food security concerns.[28] Substantial development assistance programs formulated within a policy framework which addresses both grassroots needs and socio-economic imbalances between regional states will be a major element in building regional security.[29]

The effectiveness of the contribution external countries can make in this area could be increased by the introduction of some changes in policy direction by both donors and recipients. A greater use of cooperation agreements between regional and external governments in selected areas, for example, may improve the access of regional governments to the skills needed to pursue their development plans. As an

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[27] Of the Arab countries neighbouring Israel, only Jordan has an agreement with the ICRC permitting it to visit political prisoners. The establishment of Palestinian human rights organisations in Gaza is a welcome positive step, but there is little evidence, so far, of willingness on the part of the PLO to match international standards in this area.

[28] See *Future Relations and Cooperation between the [European] Community and the Middle East: Communication to the Commission from Vice-President Marin and Mr. van den Broek* Brussels 8 September 1993.

[29] The distributive justice of development assistance programs within states, which ultimately could have serious implications for regime security throughout the region, is essentially a matter for political decision by individual recipient governments. Although it will be a consideration in many cases, it is unlikely to be a determining factor in decisions by donors about whether aid should be extended. Such decisions will also be affected, of course, by a range of humanitarian, political, strategic and commercial considerations.

illustration, it may be in the interests of both external governments and individual regional governments to agree that in specific areas of expertise, feasibility studies for particular projects may be undertaken with funding provided by the external government. That funding could be provided on the basis of an agreement that if the outcomes of such studies were regarded by the regional government as positive, the project would be awarded automatically by that government to a firm nominated by the external government. Funding for such projects, of course, would have to be secured through some form of multilateral institution, or from funds provided by donor countries.

An approach of this kind would need to identify specific areas of national excellence in which such agreements would apply. It would also need to find an acceptable balance between the diminution of the range of choice of implementing agents available to regional governments, and the need of businesses to have a reasonable level of confidence that the investment of time and resources in pursuit of certain projects would not be wasted. The arrangement would only work if the feasibility studies were of a high calibre. The firms engaged to undertake the feasibility studies and to implement approved projects would need to be carefully selected by governments with a view to maintaining international reputations for professional probity and technical excellence.

Agreements between governments along the lines described above would need to be limited in duration until their effectiveness could be evaluated. The process would also require regular joint review through ministerial level joint trade committees. But such an approach would open up a potentially important range of opportunities for regional governments to attract foreign skills in support of their development projects. Intergovernmental agreements along these lines would be particularly well-suited to projects of a regional nature, where private businesses would almost certainly feel more comfortable pursuing opportunities with a higher degree of predictability which an inter-governmental framework would provide.

External governments are also likely to be asked to assist in meeting regional demands for investment capital. The infrastructural demands of the region over the next decade are likely to be massive; Israeli estimates of expenditure requirements for regional cooperation projects over the next five to ten years are from 18 to 27 billion US dollars.[30] The extent of the need for supplementation of the resources of the World Bank and the International Development Agency, or for the creation of new regional development banks for infrastructural investments, however, is not yet clear. It is also far from certain that a regional development bank will prove to be the most efficient means of developing and implementing such projects, when institutions such as the World Bank are already capable of undertaking such tasks.[31]A leading proponent of the idea of a Middle East Development Bank, the

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[30] *Development Options for Regional Cooperation* p. II–3.

[31] It has also been observed that the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development spent more on administration in its first two years than on project lending; and that it did not have to contend with the legal

Israeli economist Stanley Fisher, has acknowledged that the need for such an institution rests mostly in its capacity to assist regional problem-solving through cooperative activity.[32]

It would be appropriate, at this stage, for external governments to look to regional governments to mobilise capital from their domestic resources, through their private sectors, in the first instance. They can best succeed in mobilising such capital by providing more conducive settings for productive domestic investment. Unfortunately, change in these directions is not a simple process. Governments must provide macroeconomic stability and access to foreign currency financing. The mobilisation of private capital also involves the creation of stable regulatory and political environments, reforms of taxation and legal systems, access to markets and the development of marketing skills, absorption of technology and a range of other factors. But unless private sectors in regional countries are themselves investing, it will be very difficult for governments to attract serious interest among external business leaders in major investment possibilities.

Business

The Middle East/North Africa Economic Summit in Casablanca in October 1994 was conceived as a means of bringing together regional and international business and governments to discuss the region's economic potential and to create long term business relationships. The attempt to place a focus on the private sector in those discussions reflected the need to foster a resurgence of private investment in the region. Prior to the Summit, the IMF had identified diminished productivity of investment, deriving from the flow of external funds almost exclusively to the public sector, as a key factor adversely affecting economic performance in the region. [33]

Some of the key issues and difficulties relating to the question of attracting external business interest to the region have been mentioned above. First and foremost, businesses have to be attracted by an economic and political environment which is not only conducive to making profits, but is also competitive with opportunities to make those profits elsewhere, including in the faster-growing and larger economies

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problems of lending to an "autonomous authority" rather than a sovereign government. Clawson *op. cit.* p. 80.

[32] Fisher has commented that "to construct the best bridge or to have the best procurement procedures—you don't need this bank: you can get the World Bank. But if your question is how over the next 50 years to get people to work together and solve problems in this region...this organisation is crucial." "Economic Transition in the Occupied Territories: An Interview with Stanley Fisher" *Journal of Palestine Studies* Vol. 23, No. 4, Summer 1994 p. 59.

[33] Israel has suggested that it would be desirable in the first stage to attract private investment to joint projects related primarily to infrastructure in the areas of transportation, communications, tourism, natural resources and public utilities. Planning, coordination and funding would remain with government authorities, but the private sector would be incorporated in the implementation, financing and in many cases the operation of the services generated by these projects. In the second stage, projects would be initiated by the private sector, taking advantage of opened borders and improved regional infrastructure in areas such as tourism development and agricultural product marketing (with a focus on Europe for Jordanian exports and the Middle East for Israeli products). *Development Options for Regional Cooperation* p. II-5–9.

of the Asia–Pacific. There is likely to be considerable interest among external businesses in turn-key projects providing regional infrastructure, but regional governments will find it difficult to attract and to sustain high levels of foreign *investment* in infrastructure development. It will be especially challenging to establish the attractiveness of investment in new non-traditional infrastructure such as cable television, electronic mail, cellular phones, satellite communications, advertising and beeper paging in what is essentially a resource-poor area compared to the Persian Gulf, or expanding regional commercial centres such as Dubai.

Attracting foreign investment into other areas of regional economies may be more rewarding. Although many of the concerns mentioned above remain relevant, opportunities demonstrably exist for foreign investors to take advantage of regional proximity to European markets for tourism and for light manufactured exports including textiles and clothing, and for processed food exports.[34] But the bottom line for most foreign investors will remain the levels of perceived risk, and the profitability of investment in the region compared to opportunities elsewhere. Foreign investors and financiers will be highly sensitive to potential regulatory changes, contractual failures on the part of governments, and foreign currency constraints limiting dividend distribution or loan servicing. Potential investors will require evidence of an effective legal system to enforce contract provisions and to arbitrate disputes.

Peace and the growth of commercial dealings between the parties should lead to economies of scale in the long term, and perhaps, as a very long term objective, the development of closer integration between the region and other areas of the world economy, including that of Europe. Within the region, however, Israeli studies suggest that with the establishment of peaceful relations among them, the trade diversion potential between Israel and Syria, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates may amount to only 13 per cent of Israeli trade and only 3.7 per cent of the aggregate Arab trade (although this is excluding potential trade in services and potential trade expansion due to changes in production and consumption patterns and rises in the standard of living).[35]

Non-government organisations (NGOs) and expert networks

External bodies which aim to promote higher levels of dialogue between Israeli and Arab NGOs will face a sensitive task. They will encounter political resistance to any direct involvement in discussion of issues of civil society. They will need to be wary of entanglement in the activities of like-minded organisations within the region which can be depicted by their critics as agents of foreign powers, particularly at a time of heightened sensitivity regarding "the West". Even if they succeed in developing worthwhile personal contacts and exchanges of ideas among

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[34] See *Peace Projects* The Armand Hammer Fund for Economic Cooperation in the Middle East, University of Tel Aviv 1993, and Fishelson, Gideon (ed.) *Economic Cooperation in the Middle East* Westview Press, Boulder Colorado, 1989.

[35] Ben-Chaim, Meir "Israel–Arab Countries Trade" in *Peace Projects* p. 28.

Arabs and Israelis on an individual basis, external NGOs will face difficulty in tying informal dealings and information-sharing activity to policy-making processes.

Within these constraints, there remains scope for external NGOs to support the efforts of regional organisations to build networks within the region and beyond it. The main value of such activity lies in the development of contacts and support for peace-building in such areas as research, training in conflict resolution and the provision of ideas and experience from other situations. Some NGOs, such as the Search for Common Ground's Initiative for Peace and Cooperation in the Middle East, and the Ford Foundation, have made significant contributions in these areas. As this activity develops, it should provide a natural reference point for a network of resource centres operating under a conference on regional cooperation, as suggested earlier in this study.

Networks of regional experts which aim to provide analysis and ideas to leaderships can also be supported to useful effect by external institutions. Such networks may not be in a position to play a significant part in policy formulation in most Arab countries in the short term. But networks of experts can provide a means of gathering and disseminating information on issues which leaders are unwilling to address among themselves, without raising excessive domestic political complications for leaders and governments. Over time, they may help to achieve greater transparency in areas such as defence strategy and objectives than more formal arrangements among institutions whose political culture is generally resistant to change.

Conclusion

Compared to the size of the challenges facing the region, the areas identified above as possible sources of external support for the development of cooperative security processes appear rather limited. To make their appeals for support more effective in a crowded and highly competitive international agenda, regional countries will have to present arguments and offer incentives which are precisely targeted and presented. Appeals to external governments for economic support based on the potential for the region to return to conditions of social and political turmoil, or even war, are not likely to produce the level of response that can be commanded in other parts of the world where such possibilities have become a reality. Appeals to business to take a long term view of the potential of the region will draw a limited response in the absence of specific project proposals, continuing structural reforms among regional economies, and confidence within and beyond the region about its prospects. External governments may provide peace-keeping forces, which may help the process of conflict resolution, but such assistance will make only a marginal contribution to security unless such efforts are accompanied by political changes among the regional parties.

Perhaps the main part that external parties, primarily governments, can play is to seek to ensure that the various elements of the negotiating process between the

parties do not fail. Quandt has pointed out that success as a mediator requires a feeling both for the process of bringing the parties to the negotiations, and for the substance of the issues at stake. He writes:

> The United States cannot advance the search for peace between Israel and the Arabs by simply playing the role of mailman; nor can it design a blueprint and impose it on reluctant parties. In between these extremes lies the proper role for the United States—catalyst, energizer, friend, nag, technician, architect. Some of each of these roles has been necessary whenever the United States has succeeded in bridging the gaps between Arabs and Israelis. Carrots and sticks must both be used, sometimes together, to influence reluctant parties.[36]

The essence of that assessment is also relevant to external parties other than the United States, even though they have few carrots and even fewer sticks at their disposal. The fact that some third countries have maintained genuinely warm relations at a variety of levels with each of the parties to the Arab–Israel dispute accords them a degree of standing which can be used to support the process of negotiation. That support is important in its own right, even though it may not affect significantly the substance of outcomes.

The standing of external parties can be reinforced by taking an active and constructive part in developing the pre-negotiation situation between regional countries, through facilitating exchanges of information and experience. External parties may also assist in the identification of areas of sensitivity attached to proposals for cooperation. They may provide ideas for the resolution of those differences for the parties to consider. But the extent to which external parties will be prepared to commit their resources to such activity ahead of other global priorities will probably depend, to a large degree, upon the progress being made among the key parties themselves.

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[36] Quandt, W. *Peace Process* p. 420.

IX CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study has sought to provide an analysis of the relationship in the Middle East between politics and security in its various dimensions, as a means of exploring the idea of cooperative security outside a United Nations context. It has underlined the need to see security in the Middle East as a process as well as a goal. Outcomes of political issues in the Middle East will shape regional security policies. Depending upon how they are developed and applied, the approaches which regional countries adopt towards their security may also become an important influence upon political outcomes, especially in the longer term.

The process of building new security arrangements in the region has to face problems of timing as well as of substance. The political dynamics of the region are entering a delicate phase following the optimism which greeted the peace process launched in Madrid, and the subsequent conclusion of a range of interim and permanent agreements between Israel, the PLO and Jordan. The prospects for these agreements providing a basis for comprehensive peace and cooperative security for the parties involved will depend upon the introduction of further, far-reaching changes.

These changes will need to affect political dealings within states, and to create new approaches among leaders and audiences to relations between states. Mechanisms that may help the parties to the Arab-Israel dispute to establish the basis for durable peace and security cannot provide a substitute for preparedness on the part of regional leaders both to persuade their audiences to support the political realities of the situation that each of them faces, and to extend to those audiences a sense of participation in making historical compromises where these are needed.

Evans is entirely correct when he observes that for cooperative security to succeed a new mind-set is required in the conduct of international relations,

> ...one that pays as much attention to the satisfaction of basic human needs as it does to the interests of states; one which evaluates assessments of threats to peace and security in non-military as well as traditional military terms; and one which endeavours to move beyond power politics towards cooperative problem solving.[1]

Timing and balance are critical factors in determining whether such an approach can be developed. There is a need to focus on core political differences under the

[1] Evans, *Cooperating for Peace* p. 58.

political conditions that are most likely to produce constructive outcomes. This suggests a long-term approach of confidence-building, rather than early attempts to bridge existing differences. Against this approach must be balanced the need to resolve many of those issues soon, in order to deal with the emerging challenges to regional economic security of population and resource pressures, and the political security issues posed by radical Islam. Security demands economic development; but economic growth and regional economic cooperation to deal with impending, otherwise intractable, resource shortages is probably beyond reach without security in other areas.

If a choice has to be made, the less dangerous option for regional leaders is probably to opt for long-term solutions, rather than attempting the sale of compromise outcomes to ill-prepared and sometimes alienated audiences. Changes in the perceptual predispositions of audiences on all sides will require time. On the Arab side in particular, it will involve the development of political institutions to give effect to policies and approaches decided upon by leaders. A long-term approach has to be accompanied, therefore, by concerted efforts in the short term on all sides not to exacerbate the sensitivity of their political and other differences. Laying the foundations of new security arrangements will be a slow process, but it will not proceed very far unless there is agreement between leaders on the general principles within which long-term solutions will be negotiated.

Unfortunately, the regional challenges mentioned above may emerge much faster than political cultures change, leaders agree on principles, and new political institutions develop. In that case, it is unlikely that leaders will succeed in devising and managing the controlled evolution of relations between their states in a manner which would support ideas of cooperation.

The temptation to seek unilateral solutions to key issues will be strong, particularly for Israel as the pre-eminent regional power. The yearning of Israelis for normal relations with their neighbours, on the basis of their acceptance as a distinctive society which has much to offer to the collective good of the region, will inevitably be balanced against the dilemmas Israel faces, as the regional outlook grows more problematic. If cooperative security approaches are to develop, Israel must avoid succumbing to the temptation of attempting to force the pace of normalisation beyond what the regional traffic can bear. Any gains Israel might make in terms of its national security by virtue of its superior regional power alone would prove illusory in the longer term as the security of neighbouring states degenerated further. Israel has to take risks of its own. It has to protect its essential interests, while also testing how much change can be achieved in grassroots attitudes in the Arab countries and at home, and at what cost. Israeli approaches to security may continue to take deterrence as their starting point, but those approaches should not be allowed to end there.

There is an important linkage between cooperative security and notions of equity. An absence of equitable economic benefits from entering into cooperative relations with Israel; an absence of political outcomes from the peace process which

demonstrably alter the advantages enjoyed by Israel as the *status quo* power; and an absence of any reason to believe that the further normalisation of relations with Israel would bring change for the better on either count, would be capable of hastening the onset of serious political challenges to moderate Arab regimes. But those regimes cannot hope for Israelis to compromise beyond politically realistic limits, nor can they afford to ignore, or to misunderstand, the political culture within which Israeli decisions are made.

By fortunate historical coincidence, the leaders of Jordan and Egypt are people who have demonstrated their commitment to pragmatism and moderation in foreign policy, and to upholding values of tolerance and individual worth. For all the problems it faces in transforming itself from a liberation movement into a government, the PLO has the potential to develop in similar directions. The idealism which gave rise to the birth of Israel has not diminished among its present leaders. The present Israeli government has demonstrated a strong, but conditional, commitment to the peace process, despite attempts from all sides to destroy that process through terror.

In each of these cases, leaderships acknowledge the need to move their societies forward. They are doing so at considerable political and personal risk, confronting economic and political issues which are deeply-rooted in the nature of those societies and reinforced by the failures of politics to end the instability of the region. They need and deserve support against the forces of bigotry and iconoclastic politics. Israel, as the country whose interests are most directly affected by the fate of pragmatic Arab leaders, has the strongest interest in responding to their needs, and in sharing the political and economic burden which a cooperative approach to security entails.

The development of security in the relations between Israel and Syria will require a slow process of trust-building, but one which, as noted above, is based on clear understandings on both sides regarding the goals of that process. Syrian interest in meeting Israeli objectives of normalisation is unlikely to develop at a rate which Israelis find comfortable. The societies are too different in fundamental ways, and the incentives for perceptual change on the Syrian side are not powerful enough yet to penetrate to the heart of those differences.

If that assessment is correct, Israel does not stand to gain by setting normal relations as the benchmark of peace and the condition for returning the Golan to Syrian control. It should be seeking, rather, to reach specific understandings on particular issues which will have a direct bearing on security between the two countries, including guarantees of water rights. Normal relations with Syria, if they ever develop, will emerge from the experience of constructive approaches to dealing with mutual problems. They would almost certainly benefit from the sort of interactive institutional arrangements proposed in this study. Normalisation of relations will not be initiated in practice by agreement between governments, or preserved by the presence of third parties between them.

A key element in developing the notion of cooperative security will be to focus the process of peace-building upon developing a sense of mutuality and respect between Israelis and Palestinians. Achieving durable security is not only a matter of understanding the interests and interaction of states. It also requires mutual understanding of the ways in which leaderships and their audiences see the world, themselves and each other.

The answer to the question of whether a cooperative approach is capable of being developed is therefore heavily qualified, not by doubt about the need for such an approach, or its theoretical feasibility, but mainly by scepticism about its political feasibility within realistic time frames. If the ideas of cooperative security are to be applied, the processes begun in Madrid must be steered towards promoting the concept among leaders and audiences, and towards achieving institutional outcomes which reflect that approach. A cooperative security approach will not emerge spontaneously.

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